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THE POOR RICH MAN,

AND

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THE RICH POOR MAN

Sedgwick

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"HOPE LESLIE," "THE LINWOODS," &c.

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There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing : there is that maketh himself poor
yet hath great riches."

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TO THE REV. JOSEPH TUCKERMAN,

THE POOR MAN'S FRIEND,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR

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THE POOR RICH MAN
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CHAPTER I.

SCHOOL-DAYS.

JUST out of the little village of Essex, in New England, and just at the entrance of a rustic bridge, there is a favourite resting-place for loiterers of all ages. One of a line of logs that have been laid down to enable passengers at high water to reach the bridge dry-shod, affords an inviting seat under the drooping limbs of some tall sycamores. There the old sit down to rest their weary limbs, and read with pensive eye the fond histories that memory has written over the haunts of their secluded lives. There, too, the young pause in their sports, and hardly know why their eyes follow with such delight the silvery little stream that steals away from them, kissing the jutting points of the green meadows, and winding and doubling its course as if, like a pleased child, it would, by any pretext, lengthen its stay;—nor, certainly, why no island that water bounds will ever look so beautiful to them as that little speck of one above the bridge,

with its burden of willows, elders, and clematis; of a summer evening, their every leaf lit with the firefly's lamp;—nor why their eye glances from the white houses of the village street, glimmering through the trees, and far away over the orchards and waving grain of the uplands, and past the wavy line of hills that bound the horizon on one side, to fix on the bald gray peaks of that mountain wall whose Indian story the poet has consecrated. Time will solve to them this *why*.

Under those sycamores, on a certain afternoon many years past, sat Charlotte May, a pale, sickly looking girl, talking with Harry Aikin; and beside them Susan May, whose ruddy cheek, laughing eye, and stocky little person presented an almost painful contrast to her stricken sister. Charlotte was examining with a very pleased countenance a new little Bible, bound in red morocco. "Did Mr. Reed give you your choice of the prizes, Harry?" she asked.

"Oh, no; Mr. Reed is too much afraid of exciting our emulation, or rivalry, as he calls it, for that. He would not even call the books he gave us prizes; but he just told us what virtue, or rather quality, we had been most distinguished for."

"I guess I know what yours was, Harry," said Susan May, looking up from weaving a wreath of nightshade that grew about them.

"What do you guess, Susy?"

"Why, kindness to everybody!"

"No, not that."

"Well, then, loving everybody."

Harry laughed and shook his head. "No, nor that, Susy;" and, opening to the first unprinted page

of the Bible, he pointed to the following testimony in his master's autograph. Charlotte read it aloud: "It gives me great pleasure to record here the diligence and success of my esteemed pupil, Harry Aikin, and still more to testify to his strict practice of the golden rule of this book, *Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you.*"

"There, there! I knew I guessed right. You know you couldn't do so if you didn't love everybody; could he, Lottie?"

"You were not very far from right, Susan," replied her sister; "for I am sure Harry could not do so much to make everybody happy if he did not love almost everybody."

"No, indeed, I do not; at least, I feel a great difference. Do you think, for instance, I love Morris Finley or Paulina Clark as well as I love you and Susan? No, not by a sea-full. But, then, it is very true, as mother used to tell me, if you want to love people, or *almost* love them, just do them a kindness, think how you can set about to make them happier, and the love, or something that will answer the purpose, will be pretty sure to come."

"It will," said Charlotte, with a faint smile; "otherwise how could we live up to the rule of this book; and certainly God never gave us a law that we could not obey if we would. O, Harry, I am so glad you got the Bible instead of any of the other books, for I know you will love it, and study it, and live after it."

"I will try, Lottie."

"But, then, Harry, it seems to me those that are well, and strong, and at ease, can never value

that book as those do who are always sick, and suffering pain."

It was the rarest thing in the world for Charlotte to allude to her peculiar trials. Harry looked sad, and little Susan, who had the most marvellous faculty of seeing a bright side to every thing, said, in a tender voice, and putting her arm round her sister's neck,

"Then, Lottie, there is some comfort in being sick, is not there?"

"There is, Susan; there is comfort when you cannot eat, nor sleep, nor walk abroad in the pure air, nor look out upon this beautiful world; when neither doctors' skill nor friends' love can lessen one pang, it is then comfort—it is life to the dead, Susan, to read in this blessed book of God's goodness and compassions; to sit, as it were, at the feet of Jesus, and learn from him who brought life and immortality to light; that there is a world where there is no more sickness nor pain—where all tears are wiped away."

There was a pause, first broken by Susan asking if those that were well and happy did not love to read the Bible too.

"Oh, yes, indeed," replied Harry; "I remember mother used to say she read the Bible for every thing—to make her wiser, and better, and happier. I believe seeing mother so happy over it has made me like it more."

"I should think so," said Susan; "I am sure I should not love to read any thing that did not make me happy—but here comes Morris; what book did you get, Morris?"

"Bewick's History of Birds"

“ Oh, full of pictures—how lovely !” exclaimed Susan, running over the leaves ; “ did Paulina Clark get a book, Morris ?”

“ Yes, and she has changed it at Hutchinson’s store for a pink silk handkerchief.”

“ How could she ? I am sorry !” said Charlotte.

“ It’s just like her !” said Susan ; and then, returning Morris’s book, she added, “ after all, I had rather have Harry’s Bible.”

“ The more goose you, then—my book cost twice as much as his Bible.”

“ Did it ?” Susan was rather crestfallen.

“ To be sure it did, and, what is more, I can sell it for twice as much.”

“ Ah, then I’ve caught you, sir ; Harry would not sell his Bible for any sum, so by your own rule Harry’s is worth the most !”

Morris was somewhat disconcerted. He resumed, in a lowered tone, “ Maybe I should not sell it just for the dollar and a half ; but, then, when one knows the value of money, one does not like to have so much lying idle. Money should work, as father says. If you could reckon interest and compound interest as well as I can, Miss Susan, I guess you would not like to have your money lying idle on a book-shelf !”

“ I don’t know what kind of interest compound interest is, Morris ; but I know the interest I take in a pleasant book is better than a handful of money, and if I only had the dollar and a half I would give it to you in a minute for that book.”

“ ‘ *Only had !*’ Ah, there’s the rub ! you people that despise money never get it, and that is what father always says.”

“ ‘ *Despise it !* ’ ” repeated Susan, sighing as she knelt on the log between Harry and her sister, and bound over Charlotte’s pale forehead the wreath of ominous nightshade. “ ‘ *Despise money,* ’ Morris, I would do any thing in the world to get enough to take Lottie down to that wonderful New-York doctor ; but there’s one comfort, Lottie,” she added, brightening, “ he might not cure you, and then we should feel worse than ever.”

“ What doctor is Sue speaking of ? ” asked Harry, looking up eagerly from his Bible.

Charlotte explained that a cousin living in New-York had written to her of a physician in the city, who had been particularly successful in treating diseases of the spine. Her cousin had urged Charlotte’s coming to the city, and had kindly offered to receive the poor invalid at her house. “ Father,” she said, “ talks of our going, but I do not think we can make it out, so I don’t allow myself to think of it *much* ; and when murmuring thoughts rise, I remember how many rich people there are who travel the world over, and consult all the doctors, and are nothing bettered ; and so I put a little patience-salve on the aching place, and that, as Susy would say, is a great comfort when you can’t get any thing else.”

“ Yes—when you can’t,” replied Harry, fixing his eyes compassionately on Charlotte’s face, where, though the cheek was pale, and the eye sunken, the health of the soul was apparent. “ But can’t there be some way contrived ? ”

“ We are trying our best at contrivance, Harry. Father, you know, never has any thing ahead ; but he offered himself to let out old Jock by the day, and

save all he earns towards the journey ; that will be something. I have three dollars left of the last I ever earned, and dear little Susy has given me five dollars, which aunt Mary sent to buy her a cloak."

"And how much will the journey cost, Charlotte?"

"Father says his last journey down to Barnstable cost him but ten dollars besides the provision and fodder he carried in the wagon. New-York is not as far as Barnstable ; but horse-keeping there is terrible, and I dare not think what the doctor's bill may be."

"Oh," thought Harry, "if I were only rich! if I were only worth fifty dollars!" Money he had none, but he ran over in his mind all his convertible property. "There's Bounce (his dog); Squire Allen offered me three dollars for Bounce—I thought I would not sell him for a hundred, but he shall have him—and I have been offered two dollars for Sprite and Jumper (two black squirrels he had tamed with infinite pains); and what else have I?" He ran over his little possessions, his wearing apparel, article by article; he had no superfluity—sundry little keepsakes, but they were out of the class of money-value articles—his Bible, it was new and pretty, and would certainly bring a dollar. He looked at it lovingly, and was obliged again to look at Charlotte before he mentally added it to the list. He resolved on his benevolent traffic, and was just saying, "To-morrow, Charlotte, I think I shall have something to add to your store," when Morris, who had taken a seat at some distance, and seemed much absorbed, started up, exclaiming,

"Yes, in five years, at compound interest. I

shall have two dollars and a fraction—won't that be a nest-egg, Harry Aikin?"

A tear in Charlotte's eye had already replied to Harry, but any reply to Morris was cut off by the appearance of Charlotte's father, Philip May, coming down the road. Philip was a most inoffensive, kind-hearted creature; and, though rather an unproductive labourer in worldly matters, he had, by dint of harming no one, and serving every one rather better than himself, kept bright the links of human brotherhood, and made them felt, too, for his general appellation was "Uncle Phil." As "Uncle Phil" approached, it was apparent that the calm current of his feelings had been ruffled. Little Susan, her father's pet, with the unerring eye of a loving child, was the first to perceive this. "What's the matter, father?" she asked.

"Oh, dreadful bad news! I don't know how you'll stand it, Charlotte"—the girls were breathless—"poor Jock is gone!"

"Gone, sir! how gone? what do you mean?"

"Clean gone!—*drowned*!"

"Drowned! oh, dear, how sorry I am!" and "poor Jock!" was exclaimed and reiterated, while Uncle Phil turned away to hide certain convulsive twitches of his muscles.

"But it's some comfort, any how," said Susan, the first to recover herself, "that he was so old he must have died of his own accord before long."

"And that comfort you would have had if it had been me instead of Jock, Susan."

"Oh, father!"

"I did not mean nothing, child; I'm sure I think it is kind of providential to have a lively dis-

position, that's always rising over the top of every trouble. But then it's so inconvenient to lose Jock just now, when he's arning money for us ; and how in natur am I ever to get Charlotte to New-York without him ?”

“ Don't think of that now, father ; how did the accident happen ?”

“ Ah, that's the onluckiest of all ; it beats all that Sam should be so careless. You know I let Jock out to Sam Glover to plough his meadow—you said, Charlotte, Jock looked too low in flesh for hard work ; I wish I had taken your warning ! Well, you see, when Sam went to dinner, he tied Jock close by the river, and somehow the poor critter backed down the bank into the river, and fell on his back, and he was tied in such a fashion he could not move one way or the other, and the water running into his nostrils, and ears, and mouth—and when Sam came back from dinner it was all over with him.”

“ Then,” said Morris, “ it was wholly owing to Sam Glover's carelessness ?”

“ To be sure, there was no need on't ; if it had been me, I should have calculated to tie the horse so that if he did back into the river he could have helped himself out.”

“ Better have tied him where there was no danger of such an accident, Uncle Phil.” Uncle Phil was right in his calculations. What were accidents to other men, made up the current of events to him. “ But,” proceeded Morris, “ you can certainly make Sam pay for the horse ?” Uncle Phil made no reply. “ You mean to get it out of him don't you, Uncle Phil .”

“ I kind o’ hate to—Sam ain’t rich.”

“ No—but he is not poor. I heard him say to father, when he was talking of buying the mountain farm, that he had two hundred dollars clear of the world.”

“ He did not, did he ?”

“ He certainly did, and I don’t see why you should make him a present of your horse.”

“ Nor do I see, father, why you should not be just to yourself,” said Charlotte.

“ Well, well, I calculate to do what’s fair, all round—but Sam felt bad, I tell you ! and I did not want to bear down on him ; but when I’ve got the mind of the street, I’ll do something about speaking to him.”

Charlotte mentally determined to keep her father up to this resolution, the most energetic that could be expected from him ; and all lamenting the fate of poor Jock, the parties separated and proceeded homeward.

CHAPTER II.

“ UNCLE PHIL.”

WE have rather unceremoniously presented some of the humble inhabitants of Essex to our readers. A few more preparatory words to ensure a better acquaintance. Philip May was bred a hatter. His trade and patrimony (amounting to

a few hundred dollars) would have ensured independence to most of his countrymen; but Philip lacked their characteristics—energy and sound judgment, and all the prospering *go-ahead* qualities that abound with them. But, lacking these, a most kind Providence had given him a disposition that made him content without them, and quite independent of their results. His horizon was bounded by the present hour—he literally took no thought for the morrow. He married early, and in this turning point of life Heaven seemed to have taken special care of him. Never was a wife better calculated by vigour, firmness, and industry, to counteract the destructive tendencies of a shiftless husband. Nor was she, like some driving wives, a thorn in her quiet, loving husband's side. While she cured all the evils that could be cured in her condition, she endured the incurable with cheerfulness—a marvellous lightener of the burdens of life!

Before his marriage Philip built a house, the cost of which far exceeding his means, he finished but one end of it, and the rest was left for the rains to enter, and the winds to whistle through, till he took his wife's counsel, sold his house, paid his debts, and bought a snug little dwelling far more comfortable than their "shingle palace" in its best state.

But, before they arrived at this stage in the journey of life, both good and evil had chanced to them. Their firstborn, Ellen, ran into an open cistern, the surface of which was just on a level with the platform before the house: so it had remained a year after the active child began to run

about; and, to its mother's reiterated requests and warnings, Philip always answered—"Now that's just what I am going about next week." When his only child was drowned in this seeming water-trap was certainly no time to reproach Philip, and he who never reproached any one could not be expected to make himself an exception. He merely said, "It was a wonderful providence Ellen was drowned that day, for the very next he calculated to put a kerb to the cistern—but it was meant so to be—he always felt Ellen was not long for this world!" Their next child was our friend Charlotte; and she, like her drowned sister, was born with one of the best mortal gifts—a sound constitution, which, watched over by her wise and vigilant mother, promised a long life of physical comfort. But these prospects were sadly reversed when her father, having one day taken her out in his wagon, left her holding the reins "while he just stepped to speak to a neighbour." While he was *speaking*, the horse took fright, Charlotte was thrown out, and received an injury that embittered her whole life. Philip was really grieved by this accident. He said "It seemed somehow as if it was so to be, for he had no thought of taking Charlotte out that day till he met her in his way."

His next mishap was the burning of his workshop, in which, on one gusty day, he left a blazing fire. A consequence so natural seemed very strange to Uncle Phil, who said "It was most *onaccountable*, for he had often left it just so, and it had never burnt up before!" This incident gave a new turn to Philip's life. He abandoned his trade, and really loving, or, as he said, "aiming" to suit every.

body, he was glad to be rid of incessant complaints of want of punctuality, bad materials, and bad work, and became what most imbeciles become sooner or later, a Jack at all trades. In a community like that at Essex, where labourers in every department are few, and work plenty, even the universal Jack need not starve; and Uncle Phil, if unskilful and *slack*, was always good-natured, and seldom so much engrossed by one employment that he could not leave it for another. But, though rather an unprofitable labourer, Uncle Phil had no vices. He was temperate and frugal in his habits, and a striking illustration of how far these virtues alone will sustain a man even in worldly matters. His small supplies were so well managed by his wife, that no want was felt by his family during her life. That valuable life was prematurely ended. Soon after the birth of her last baby, Uncle Phil was called up in the night by some cattle having entered his garden through his rickety fence. His bedroom door opened upon the yard; he left it open; it was a damp, chilling night. Mrs. May, being her own nurse, had fallen asleep exhausted. She awoke in an ague that proved the prelude to a fatal illness; and Uncle Phil, being no curious tracer of effects to causes, took no note of the open door, and the damp night, and replied to the condolence of his friends that “*Miss May* was too good a wife for him—the only wonder was Providence had spared her so long.” More gifted people than honest Uncle Phil deposit quietly at the door of Providence the natural consequences of their own carelessness.

The baby soon followed its mother, and Philip

May was left with but two children—Charlotte, at the time of her mother's death, thirteen, and Susan, nine. They had been so far admirably trained by their mother, and were imbued with her character, seeming only to resemble their father in hearts running over with the milk of human kindness, unless Susan's all-conquering cheerfulness was derived from her father's ever-acquiescing patience. His was a passive virtue—hers an active principle. If any one unacquainted with the condition of life in New-England should imagine that the Mays had suffered the evils of real poverty, they must allow us to set them right. In all our wide-spread country there is very little necessary poverty. In New-England *none* that is not the result of vice or disease. If the moral and physical laws of the Creator were obeyed, the first of these causes would be at an end, and the second would scarcely exist.* Industry and frugality are wonderful multipliers of small means. Philip May brought in but little, but that little was well administered. His house was clean—his garden productive (the girls kept it wed)—his furniture carefully preserved—his family comfortably clad, and his girls schooled. No wonder Uncle Phil never dreamed he was a poor man!

Henry Aikin was the youngest of twelve children. His father was a farmer—all his property, real and personal, might have amounted to some

* We have heard a gentleman who, in virtue of the office he holds as minister-at large, is devoted to succouring the poor, state, that even in this city (New-York), he had known very few cases of suffering from poverty that might not be traced directly or indirectly to vice

five or six thousand dollars, and on this he had his dozen children to feed and clothe, and fit to fill honourable places in society—to be farmers, mechanics, doctors, ministers, and so on. In such a family, well regulated, there are excellent lessons in the economy of human life, and well learned were they by the Aikins, and afterward well applied.

Morris Finley was the son of the only man in Essex who had not any regular business. He was what our rustics call a schemer and a jockey; in a larger sphere he would have been a speculator. Money, not as a means, but as an end, seemed to him the chief good; and he had always a plan for getting a little more of it than his neighbours. He was keen-sighted and quick-witted; of course he often succeeded, but sometimes failed; and, distrusted and disliked through life, at the end of it he was not richer in worldly goods than his neighbours, and poor indeed was he in all other respects. He had, however, infused his ruling passion into his son Morris, and he, being better educated than his father, and regularly trained to business, had a far better chance of ultimate success.

CHAPTER III.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

A WINTER had passed away, and one of our ungenial springs, always unkind to invalids, was wearing to the last days of May. Charlotte's disease was aggravated by long confinement, and as she sat toiling over an old coat of her father's, her eye turned sadly towards the cold sky and the thinly-clad boughs of the trees that were rustling against the window, and that, like her, seemed pining for warmth and sunshine. "Will summer ever come?" she thought; and then, suppressing a sigh of impatience, she added, "but I don't mean to murmur." At this moment Susan bounded into the room, her cheek flushed with pleasure.

"Good news, good news!" she cried, clapping her hands; "Harry has got home!"

"Has he?"

"Why, Lottie, you don't seem a bit joyful!"

The tears came to Charlotte's eyes. "I have got to be a poor creature indeed," she said, "when the news of Harry's getting home does not make me joyful."

"Oh, but Lottie, it's only because you did not sleep last night: take a little of your mixture and lie down, and by the time Harry gets up here—he told me he should come right up—you will look glad; I am sure you feel so now."

‘I do, Susy: Essex never seems Essex when Harry is out of it.’

“No, I am sure it does not; but, then, if he did not go away, we should not have the joy of his coming home.” Susan was the first to see the compensation.

“I hope,” said Charlotte, after a short pause, “that Harry will not go away again on this business; he may be getting money, but then he should have been at school the past winter. You know what Doctor Allen used to say to mother—‘Education is the best capital for a young man to begin with.’ I am afraid Harry has caught some of Morris Finley’s notions.”

“Oh, no, no, Charlotte!—they are as different as day and night. I am sure, if Harry is eager to get money, it’s because he has some good use for it, and not, like Morris, just for the money’s sake.”

“I hope it is so, but even then I do not like this travelling about; I am afraid he will get an unsettled disposition.”

“Why, Charlotte, it is not so very pleasant travelling about in freezing winter weather, and deep muddy spring roads, peddling books.”

The subject of their discussion broke it off by his entrance; and, after mutual kind greetings were over, he sat down by Charlotte with a face that plainly indicated he had something to say, and knew not how to begin.

“Have you had good luck, Harry?” asked Charlotte.

“Very!” The very was most emphatic.

“Well, I hope it won’t turn your head.”

“I don’t know,” he replied, with a smile; “it feels very light just now, and my heart too.”

Charlotte looked grave.

“No one would think,” said Susan, “that Charlotte was glad to see you, Harry; but she is, for we both love you just as well as if you were a brother—having none that’s natural, you know. But poor Lottie is worse than ever this spring, and nothing seems to do her any good; and I have been trying to persuade her to send round a subscription-paper to get money to go to New-York; maybe she’ll consent now you have come to ask her.”

“That’s the very thing,” said Harry, “I want to speak to her about.”

“Oh, don’t, Harry; if our friends and neighbours were to think of it themselves, I would accept the money thankfully, but I *cannot* ask for it.”

“You need not, Charlotte—you need not—but you will take it from a brother, as Susy almost calls me, won’t you?”

He hastily took from his pocketbook five ten-dollar notes, and put them on Charlotte’s lap.

“Harry!” Charlotte feebly articulated.

“Oh, Harry, Harry!” shouted Susan, throwing her arms round his neck in a transport of joy, and then starting back and slightly blushing; “did I not tell you so, Lottie?” she said.

Charlotte smiled through her tears. “Not precisely *so*, Susy, for who could have expected this? But I might have known it was not for the money, as you did say, but for what the money would bring, that Harry was working.”

“And what could money bring so good as bet-

ter health for you, Charlotte? Your suffering is the only thing that ever makes me unhappy; and so, after all, it is selfishness in me."

Happy would it be for our race if there were more such selfishness as Harry Aikin's. The benevolent principle is, after all, the true alchemy that converts the lead to gold.

The preceding fall, and shortly before the scene described at the bridge, an acquaintance and very good friend of Harry's, a bookseller in the shire town of their county, had applied to Harry to be his agent in peddling books, and had offered him a tempting per centage on his sales. Harry, then but fourteen, was rather young for such a business; but the good bookseller had good reason to rely on his fidelity and discretion, and hoped much from his modest and very pleasing address. Harry communicated the offer to his parents. They told him to decide for himself; that whatever money he earned should be his; but that, as he was to go to a trade the following spring, and the intervening winter being the only time he had for further school-education, they advised him to forego the bookseller's offer. Harry could think of plenty of eligible appropriations for any sum he might earn; but, after a little reflection, nothing that even fifty dollars could buy weighed in the scales against six months' good instruction; and, thanking his parents for their liberality to him, he decided on the school. This decision occurred on the very day of poor Jock's untimely death, and was reversed by that event, and the consequent overthrow of Charlotte May's project. He immediately conceived the design of effecting her journey to New

York by the result of his labour ; and, communicating his purpose to his two confidential friends, his parents (most happy are those children who make their parents the depositaries of their secrets), he received their consent and approbation. They were consistent Christians, and thought that active goodness enriched their child far more than money, or even than education, which they held to be next best to virtue. The contract was made with the bookseller, and the fifty dollars, an immense sum to him that earned it, and to her who received it, estimated by the painstaking of the one, and the relief and gratitude of the other, were appropriated to the expenses of the New-York journey.

Those who travel the world over seeking pleasures that have ceased to please ; going, as some one has said, from places where no one regrets them, to places where no one expects them, can hardly conceive of the *riches* of a poor person, who, having fifty dollars to spend on the luxury of a journey, feels the worth of every sixpence expended in a return of either advantage or enjoyment.

If any of my readers have chanced to hear a gentleman curse his tailor, who has sent home, at the last moment, some new exquisite articles of apparel for a journey, when they were found to be a hair's breadth too tight or too loose ; or if they have assisted at the perplexed deliberations of a fine lady as to the colour and material of her new dresses and new hat, and have witnessed her vexations with dressmakers and milliners, we invite them to peep into the dwelling of our young friends, and witness the actual happiness resulting

from the successful expedients and infinite ingenuity of the poor.

The practicability of the long-wished-for journey had been announced to Uncle Phil, and they were entering upon deliberations about the outfit, when their father, beginning, as need was, at the crown of his head, exclaimed, "I declare, gals, I never told you my bad luck about my tother hat. I laid it down by the door just for a minute last Sabbath, and our plaguy pup run off with it into a mud-puddle—it was the worse for wear before, and it looks like all natur now."

"Let us look at it, father," said Susan; "there are not many people that know you in New-York, and maybe we can smooth it up and make it do." The hat was brought, and examined, and heads mournfully shaken over it; no domestic *smoothing-up* process would make it decent, and *decency* was to be attained. Suddenly, Charlotte remembered that during her only well week that spring, she had bound some hats for Mr. Ellis, the hatter, and Susan was despatched to ascertain if her earnings amounted to enough to pay for the re-dressing of her father's hat. Iris could scarcely have returned quicker than did Susan; indeed, her little divinityship seldom went on such pleasant errands. "Everybody in the world is kind to us," said Susan, as she re-entered, breathless. "Mr. Ellis has sent full pay for your work, Lottie, and says he'll dress father's hat over for nothing. I'm so glad, for now you can get a new riband for your bonnet."

"After all the necessaries are provided."

"Anybody but you, Lottie, would call that a necessary. Do look at this old dud—all frayer

out. It has been turned, and died, and sponged, and now it is not fit to wear in Essex—what will they say to it in New-York?”

“We’ll see, Susy, how we come out. Father’s Sunday coat *must* be turned.” The coat was turned, and the girls were delighted to see it look *almost* as well as new; and even Susan was satisfied to pay the hat-money to Sally Fen, the tailoress.

A long deliberation followed upon father’s nether garments, and they came to the conclusion they were quite too bad to be worn where father was not known and respected. And, to get new ones, Charlotte must give up buying a new cloak, and make her old one do. There is a lively pleasure in this *making do* that the rich know not of; the cloak was turned, rebound, and new-collared, and Susan said, “Considering what a pretty colour it was, and how natural Charlotte looked in it, she did not know but what she liked it better than a new one.” And now, after Charlotte had bleached and remodelled her five-year old Dunstable, her dress was in order for the expedition—all but the riband, on which Susan’s mind was still intent. “Not but just ninepence left,” said she to Charlotte, after the last little debt for the outfit was paid. “Ninepence won’t buy the riband, that’s certain, though Mr. Turner is selling off so cheap. Why can’t you break into the fifty dollars; I do hate to have you seen in New-York with that old riband, Lottie.”

“But I must, Susan—for I told Harry I would not touch the fifty dollars till we started.”

“Well, give me the ninepence, then.” Susan’s

face brightened. She had resolved, as a last resort, to invest in the riband a certain precious quarter of a dollar which Harry had given her ages and ages ago, and which she had ever since worn as a locket. She left her sister abruptly; and, as she slid the coin from the riband, "Dear little locket," said she, "I suppose you will seem to other folks just like any other quarter, and they will just pass you from hand to hand without thinking at all about you—how foolish I am!"—she dashed a tear from her eye—"Sha'n't I love Harry just as well, and won't he love me just as well, and sha'n't I think of him more than ever now he has been so kind to Lottie, without having this to put me in mind of him?" This point settled to her own satisfaction, she turned as usual to the bright side. "How lucky Mr. Turner is selling off—I wonder what colour I had best get—Charlotte would like brown, it's so durable—but she looks so pretty in pink. It takes off her pale look, and casts such a rosy shadow on her cheek. But I am afraid she will think pink too gay for her." Thus weighing utility and sobriety against taste and becomingness, Susan entered the shop, and walking up to the counter, espied in a glass case a pink and brown plaid riband. Her own taste was gratified, and Charlotte's economy and preference of modest colours would be satisfied—in short, it was (all women will understand me) *just the thing*. She was satisfied, delighted, and, had not the master of the shop kept her waiting five minutes, she would have forgotten the inestimable value of that "quarter," that in addition to the ninepence must be paid. But in five minutes

the feelings go through many changes ; and, when Mr. Fuller said, "Here is your riband, Susan May !" Susan was standing with her back to the counter, and looking at the "quarter" as if she were studying it. She had on a deep sun-bonnet ; as she raised her head it fell back and disclosed a tear on her cheek, and disclosed it, too, to Harry Aikin, who had come in unobserved, and was standing before her. She hastily threw down the money—it rolled on to the floor—he picked it up—he recognised it, and at once understood the whole. Susan left the shop first, and we believe few ladies, though they may have spent hundreds in the splendid shops of Broadway, have had half the pleasure from their purchases that Susan May had from the acquisition of this two yards of plaid riband. We ask, which was richest (in the true sense of the word), the buyer of Cashmire shawls and blonde capes, or our little friend Susan ? And when Harry, overtaking her before she reached her own doorstep, restored the precious "quarter," she was not conscious of an ungratified wish. Had they been a little older, there might have been some shyness, some blushes and stammerings ; but now, Susan frankly told him her reluctance to part with it, her joy in getting it back again ; and, suspending it by its accustomed riband, she wore it ever after—a little nearer the heart than before !

Charlotte's last obstacle to leaving home was relieved by an invitation from Harry's mother to Susan, to pass the time of her sister's absence with her. "How thoughtful of Mrs. Aikin !" said Charlotte, after she had gratefully accepted the invitation. If there were more of this *thoughtfulness*, if

persons were more zealous to employ the means of little kindnesses to their fellow-creatures, if they considered them as members of their own family, really brothers and sisters, how many burdens would be lightened, what a harvest of smiles we should have on faces now sour and steril.

CHAPTER IV.

A POOR MAN'S JOURNEY.

It was a lovely morning in June when Uncle Phil set forth for New-York with his invalid daughter. Ineffable happiness shone through his honest face, and there was a slight flush of hope and expectation on Charlotte's usually pale and tranquil countenance as she half rebuked Susan's last sanguine expression—

“You will come home as well as I am, I know you will, Lottie!”

“Not well—oh, no, Susy, but better, I expect—I mean, I hope.”

“Better, then, if you are, that is to say, a *great deal better*—I shall be satisfied, sha'n't you, Harry?”

“I shall be satisfied that it was best for her to go, if she is any better.”

“I trust we shall all be satisfied with God's will, whatever it may be,” said Charlotte, turning her eye full of gratitude upon Harry. Harry arranged her cushions as nobody else could

to support her weak back; Susan disposed her cloak so that Charlotte could draw it around her if the air proved too fresh; and then, taking her willow basket in her hand, the last words were spoken, and they set forth. Uncle Phil was in the happiest of his happy humours. He commended the wagon—"it was just like sitting at home in a rocking-chair—it is kind o' lucky that you are lame, Lottie, or maybe Mrs. Sibley would not have offered to loan us her wagon. I was dreadful fraid we should have to go down the North River. I tell you, Lottie, when I crossed over it once, I was a most scared to death—the water went swash, swash—there was nothing but a plank between me and *eternity*; and I thought in my heart I should have gone down, and nobody would ever have heard of me again. I wonder folks can be so foolish as to go on water when they can travel on solid land—but I suppose some do!"

"It is pleasanter," said Charlotte, "to travel at this season where you can see the beautiful fruits of the earth, as we do now, on all sides of us." Uncle Phil replied and talked on without disturbing his daughter's quiet and meditation. They travelled slowly, but he was never impatient, and she never wearied, for she was an observer and lover of nature. The earth was clothed with its richest green—was all green, but of infinitely varied tints. The young corn was shooting forth—the winter wheat already waved over many a fertile hillside—the gardens were newly made, and clean, and full of promise—flowers, in this month of their abundance, perfumed the woods, and decked the gardens and courtyards, and where nothing else

grew, there were lilachs and pionies in plenty. The young lambs were frolicking in the fields—the chickens peeping about the barnyards; and birds, thousands of them, singing at their work.

Our travellers were descending a mountain where their view extended over an immense tract of country, for the most part richly cultivated.

“I declare,” exclaimed Uncle Phil, “how much land there is in the world, and I don't own a foot on't, only our little half-acre lot—it don't seem hardly right.” Uncle Phil was no agrarian, and he immediately added, “But, after all, I guess I am better off without it—it would be a dreadful care.”

“Contentment with godliness is great gain,” said Charlotte.

“You've hit the nail on the head, Lottie; I don't know who should be contented if I ain't—I always have enough, and everybody is friendly to me—and you and Susan are worth a mint of money to me. For all what I said about the land, I really think I have got my full share.”

“We can all have our share in the beauties of God's earth without owning, as you say, a foot of it,” rejoined Charlotte. “We must feel it is our father's. I am sure the richest man in the world cannot take more pleasure in looking at a beautiful prospect than I do—or in breathing this sweet, sweet air. It seems to me, father, as if every thing I look upon was ready to burst forth in a hymn of praise—and there is enough in my heart to make verses of if I only knew how.”

“That's the mystery, Lottie, how they do it—

I can make one line, but I can never get a fellow to it."

"Well, father, as Susy would say, it's a comfort to have the feeling, though you can't express it."

Charlotte was right. It is a great comfort and happiness to have the feeling, and happy would it be if those who live in the country were more sensible to the beauties of nature; if they could see something in the glorious forest besides "good wood and timber lots"—something in the green valley besides a "warm soil"—something in a waterfall besides a "mill-privilege." There is a susceptibility in every human heart to the ever-present and abounding beauties of nature; and whose fault is it that this taste is not awakened and directed? If the poet and the painter cannot bring down their arts to the level of the poor, are there none to be God's interpreters to them—to teach them to read the great book of nature?

The labouring classes ought not to lose the pleasures that, in the country, are before them from dawn to twilight—pleasures that might counterbalance, and often do, the profits of the merchant, pent in his city counting-house; and all the honours the lawyer earns between the court-rooms and his office. We only wish that more was made of the *privilege* of country life; that the farmer's wife would steal some moments from her cares to point out to her children the beauties of nature, whether amid the hills and valleys of our inland country, or on the sublime shores of the ocean. Over the city, too, hangs the vault of heaven—"thick inlaid" with the witnesses of God's power and goodness—his altars are everywhere

The rich man who "lives at home at ease," and goes irritated and fretting through the country because he misses at the taverns the luxuries of his own house—who finds the tea bad and coffee worse—the food ill cooked and table ill served—no mattresses, no silver forks—who is obliged to endure the vulgarity of a common parlour—and, in spite of the inward chafing, give a civil answer to whatever questions may be put to him, cannot conceive of the luxuries our travellers enjoyed at the simplest inn.

Uncle Phil found out the little histories of all the wayfarers he met, and frankly told his own. Charlotte's pale sweet face attracted general sympathy. Country people have time for little by-the-way kindnesses; and the landlady, and her daughters, and her domestics inquired into Charlotte's malady, suggested remedies, and described similar cases.

The open-hearted communicativeness of our people is often laughed at; but is it not a sign of a blameless life and social spirit?

CHAPTER V.

CHARLOTTE'S RETURN.

ON the very day she had appointed before leaving home, Charlotte, by dint of arranging for her father, giving him now a hint and now an impulse, returned there. Susan had opened, swept, and

garnished the house with plenty of laurels and roses, and Mrs. Aikin and some other kind matrons had sent in a store of provisions, so that Susan spread her tea-table with the abundance and variety that characterize the evening meal in New-England.

Fresh biscuit and cookies, cherry-pie, smoked beef, stewed currants, peppergrass, cheese, and radishes, were on the table—the tea-kettle hissing a welcome over the fire, and Susan and Harry standing at the door and gazing at a turn in the road, where, between two branching elms that imbowered it, appeared Uncle Phil's wagon, and Charlotte was soon folded in the arms of her loving sister, and receiving a welcome nowise less joyful from Harry.

“I declare,” said Uncle Phil, after the first salutations were passed, surveying the table with ineffable satisfaction, “you've set out what I call a tea, Susy. You beat 'em all in York—they live dreadful poor down there. To be sure, your Aunt Betsey lives in a brick house, and has a sight of furniture, and a gimcrack of a timepiece on her mantelpiece (it don't go half so true as our old wooden one), and high plated candlesticks, and such knick-knacks; yet she has all her bread to buy by the loaf, and the milk is sky-blue; as to cream, I don't believe they ever heard on't. Cakes and pies are scarce, I tell you. I don't believe peppergrass has come there yet, for I never saw a spear of it on the table, nor a speck of cheese. But the worst of all is the water. Poor Jock would have choked before he would have drank a drop of it; and they live in such a dust and

hurra, I tho't when we drove in it was general training; but they carried on so every day;—and then there is such a stifled-up feeling—I did pity 'em.”

Persons capable of more accurate comparison than Uncle Phil, may well pity those who, when summer is in its beauty, are shut up within the walls of a city, deprived of the greatest of all luxuries, which even the poorest country people enjoy—sweet air, ample space, pure water, and quiet only broken by pleasant sounds.

And often, too, have we felt a pity for the citizen similar to Uncle Phil's, when we have compared the tea-table of those we *call* poor in the country with the uninviting evening meal of the affluent in town. “Ah, father,” replied Susan, “you must remember we don't set out such a table very often *here*. I am sure I never could if we had not such kind neighbours; but, when they are kind, it don't seem to me to make much difference whether you are rich or poor.”

Susan's simple remark had an important bearing on that great subject of inequality of condition, which puzzles the philosopher, and sometimes disturbs the Christian. But did not our happy little friend suggest a solution to the riddle? Has not Providence made this inequality the necessary result of the human condition, and is not the true agrarian principle to be found in the voluntary exercise of those virtues that produce an interchange of benevolent offices? If there were a perfect community of goods, where would be the opportunity for the exercise of the virtues, of justice, and mercy, humility, fidelity, and gratitude? If

the rights of the poor *of all classes* were universally acknowledged, if intellectual and moral education were what they should be, the deaf would hear, and the blind would see; and the rich man would no longer look with fear upon the poor man, nor the poor man with envy on the rich. This true millennium is on its way. "Blessed are those who wait!"

Our friends were soon seated at their tempting tea-table, where Susan tried to busy herself with her duties, but her eyes continually rested on her sister's pale face, and it was all she could do to repress her tears and speak cheerfully when she saw plain indications that Charlotte had not reaped the advantage from her journey that they had too sanguinely expected. She perceived that Charlotte, instead of tasting the delicacies prepared for her, declined them all, even the warm biscuit and cherry-pie, and the radishes too, which she particularly liked, and made her meal of a cracker she took from her bag, and a glass of water. Susan dared not trust her voice to ask questions; Charlotte made no explanations; Harry's eyes followed Susan's, but he was silent; and Uncle Phil, too happy at getting home to observe the feelings of the parties, merely murmured once when Charlotte refused the cake, "Them New-York doctors are dum notional!"

When the tea was over, Susan could bear it no longer; and the tears streaming from her eyes, she said, "Oh, Lottie, 'tis a comfort to get you home, though you an't cured." The ice was now broken and Charlotte, much refreshed by her simple meal proceeded to relate the circumstances of her jour

ney ; but, as her narrative was prolonged by digressions, and broken by the comments of her eager listeners, we shall give its purport briefly.

The pleasure of the journey, and the hope of a cure from the far-famed New-York doctor, wrought wonders on Charlotte's feeble frame ; and when she arrived at her aunt's, she felt more strength and ease than she had experienced for years ; and, but for certain sharp twinges, she said she should have saved Harry's money and not consulted the doctor. The doctor, however, was summoned, and seemed at once inspired with an interest for his humble patient that was hardly to be expected from a man at the head of his profession, and whose attendance was sought at every moment by the first in the land. But Dr. ——— was no common man, and was a most rare physician. He studied the mind as well as the body ; he endeavoured to comprehend their delicate relations and bearings upon each other, and in his profession he ministered to both. He was a religious man in principle, and earnestly so in feeling ; and, by getting into the hearts of his patients—into the inner temple, by addressing them as religious beings, by rousing their faith and fortitude, or their submission and patience, " he was sure," as Charlotte said, to find a medicine that would do them good, if all drugs failed ; and, if the case was curable, his prescriptions operated like the old woman's herb, that " with a blessing always cured."

After an examination, he ascertained Charlotte's malady to a certainty, and that it was *incurable* ; but he did not shock her by at once telling her this. He visited her repeatedly, talked patiently

over that subject so interesting to all valetudinarians, the long history of her sickness. Thus, by degrees, he learned what he was studying—the constitution of her mind. He found she was judicious, rational, self-denying, steadfast, humble, and patient; and he then proceeded to give his advice, not with the promise of curing her, but with the well-grounded expectation of protracting her life, and rendering it comparatively comfortable to herself and useful to others. After having gradually prepared her for his opinion, he told it, and found, as he expected, that her mind was soon made up to the defeat of her hopes, and to the certainty of enduring through life a very painful disease; and not merely because it was an inevitable calamity, for when she could trust her voice to speak, she said,

“I can yet say, sir, *God's will be done!* but I am so sorry for Susy's and Harry's disappointment!”

“I am *very* sorry too,” said the kind doctor, wiping his eyes; “but it is better for them, as well as for you, that you should all know the real state of the case.”

“Oh, yes, sir, far better; for I know it is much easier to endure when we are *certain* there is no help for us.”

“Your case is not so bad as that, my child; I said there was no *cure*; there is *help*, if you will strictly adhere to the directions I give you; but it will be time enough for that to-morrow. I now leave you to rest, and to seek help and consolation where, I am sure, from your prompt submission, you are in the habit of going for it.”

“I am, sir, and it never fails me.”

“And it never will, my child. Happy is it for

doctors and patients, when they are both in habits of dependance on the Great Physician."

The next day Charlotte met the doctor with a peaceful smile on her face. The flush of hope had faded from her cheek, but the sweet light of resignation was there.

"You have been to the unfailing source of strength and peace, my child," said the doctor, "and now sit down, and we will talk over what is best for the future. You have been, as you have told me, all your life in the habit of taking medicines from various doctors—now a *sirup* is recommended, now a *mixture*; now these pills, and now those; now some new foreign medicine, and now an Indian doctor's nostrums; and, worse than all, every now and then a *course of medicine*. Henceforth take no more of it, of any sort; it has no more tendency to remove your disease than it would have to restore your leg if it had been sawn off and thrown away. Medicines, drugs, my child, are all poisons. We are obliged to give them to arrest the progress of acute diseases; but, in chronic diseases, instead of curing, they obstruct and clog the efforts of nature, and confound her operations. They debilitate the stomach, and produce a thousand of what you call 'bad feelings,' evils often worse than the malady they are employed to cure. I'll tell you a secret, my child; the older we doctors grow, the less medicine we give; and, though the world is slow to get wisdom, drugs are much less in fashion than when I was a young man. Don't be persuaded to try this and try that; each dose may do you harm, and cannot possibly do you any good. Poor people do not know what an advan

tage they have over the rich, in not being able to call the doctor for every finger-ache, or to keep a well-furnished medicine-chest in their houses. I am no wizard, but I can usually tell by the looks of the family whether there are plenty of labelled vials in the cupboard. The poor have many facilities for health over the rich; I speak of the comparatively poor—thank God, there are few in our country that would be called poor in other lands—few who cannot obtain healthful food, and plenty of it. They are not, like the rich, tempted to excess by various and delicately-cooked dishes; but, then, from ignorance or carelessness, they do not properly prepare their food; you have heard the old proverb, my child—its meaning is too true—‘the Lord sends meats, but the devil sends cooks.’ The poor man’s flour is as wholesome as the rich man’s, but his wife makes her bread carelessly, and it is sour or heavy, or eaten hot, and about as digestible as brick-bats. A poor woman, for want of a little forethought and arrangement, gets her work into a snarl; meal-time is at hand—her husband coming in from his work—children hungry—she makes a little short-cake, or claps down before the fire in a spider some half-risen dough—is it not so?”

“Dear me! yes, sir—but how should you know it?”

“A physician sees every mode of life, and learns much in his profession by observing them. Such bread as I have described, I have seen accompanied with cucumbers, Dutch cheese, fried cakes, and messes of meat done up in grease. Half the fine gentlemen and nervous ladies in our city would have been thrown into fits or fevers

by one such meal. The poor are saved by the invigorating effect of labour in the open air—when they are saved—but sickness and death often ensue.

“Among all our benevolent societies, I wish there was one for teaching the poor the arts of health—to begin with cooking well plain food. Why, if *our* poor knew how to manage their means of health and comfort, they might live as if they were in paradise. A sound mind in a sound body will make almost a paradise even of this rough-going world.”

“I should think so, sir,” said Charlotte, with a sigh; “but,” she added, modestly, “I hope, doctor, you do not think we live at home in the way you have described?”

“Oh no, my child, certainly not, by no means.”

“Indeed, we do not, sir; though I was only thirteen, and my little sister, our Susy, nine, when mother died, she had taught us to make her good bread. I mixed it, and Susy, a strong child, kneaded it: we always calculate to have light bread and good butter. We always have meat, for father thinks he can't do without it three times a day. Susy is a hearty eater, too—my appetite is poor, but our neighbours are very considerate, and I'm seldom without pie, or cake, or preserves, or something relishing. You smile, sir—I don't wish to have you think we live daintily—I don't know how it is in cities, but country people are thoughtful of one another, and any one out of health has such things sent in.”

“Pies, cakes, and preserves?”

“Yes, sir; things that taste pleasant, and are kind of nourishing.”

“Nourishing to the disease, my poor child, not to the patient. Pies, cakes, and sweetmeats are only fit for the healthy, and for those who can labour, or *exercise*, a name that, as somebody says, the rich give to their labour. No; if you mean to enjoy all the comfort your case admits of, you must discard these nice things.

“I can, sir, if it is duty.”

“I do not doubt, my child, that you both can and will do whatever you believe to be duty, and I must have great confidence in those whom I believe able to subdue their appetites to perfect obedience in these matters. You will make it a religious duty—most persons are enslaved by their appetites, because they do not bring their religion to bear upon such a small matter as eating or not eating a bit of pie. The light of the sun is as essential to the hut as to the palace; so religion is as necessary to help us through small duties as great; it is easier to suffer martyrdom with its help, than to make a temperate meal without it. But there is no need of all this preaching to you, my child; you, I am sure, will cheerfully do whatever is necessary to preserve the faculties of your mind and body.”

“I calculate to try to do what is about right, sir.”

“And that is the best possible calculation, and will lead to the very best result. There is nothing for me to do but to tell you how, in my opinion, you can best do your duty to your body—a poor infirm casket it is, but it contains an immortal treasure, and must therefore be taken good care of.”

It is not necessary to give the doctor's directions, in regard to Charlotte's food, in detail. Her diet was to consist of plain food, plainly dressed; and when he finished, Charlotte said, with a smile,

"As to eating, sir, I shall be as well off as if I were the richest lady in the land, for I can easily get the food you think convenient for me."

"As well off, and far better, my dear child; I have many rich patients to whom I make the same prescription; but, surrounded as they are by tempting luxuries, they are for ever transgressing and suffering—they do not enough take to heart the wise saying, that they that do the things that please the Lord shall receive of the fruit of the tree of immortality. But, Miss Charlotte, there are other matters besides eating to which you must be attentive; gentle and regular exercise you must have—riding will not suit you."

"That's a real mercy, sir; for, since father has lost his horse, I have no way to ride."

"You have a little house-keeping, what the women call stirring about, to do—sweeping, washing dishes, setting tables, and so on?"

"Yes, sir, but I have let our Susy do it; and, when I was able, taken in sewing, because that brought us in a little money."

"You must not sit at your needle; none but the strong can bear that. Your little hardy sister must take that part."

"Well, that is a comfort, as Susy would herself say, for I want her to learn the tailoress' trade, and Miss Sally Baker had agreed to teach her for the rent of our back room."

"By all means," said the doctor, entering with

the most benevolent interest into Charlotte's plans, "let Miss Sally have the back room; then Susy will be handy to call upon to do the heavier work, for you must not lift, or do any thing that requires strength—but I have observed that you women-folk can keep yourselves busy about what we men can't describe, nor even comprehend. Your housework is a source of contentment—a rich lady of my acquaintance says she envies her servants who have *kitchen-work* to go to in all their troubles."

"I never thought of that, sir; but it does lighten the heart to stir about, and it is a pleasure to make the most of a little, and have things orderly and comfortable."

"Oh yes, my child; the world is full of these small provisions for our happiness if we had but eyes to see them and hearts to feel them. But let me proceed to my prescriptions. You must wear flannel drawers and a flannel waistcoat with sleeves all the year round. This to an invalid is, in our varying climate, essential, for in no other way can the skin be kept of a warm and regular temperature.* Can you procure the flannel, my child?"

"I think I can, sir; Susy and I calculated to get us new woollen gowns next winter, but I guess we can make the old ones do."

"That's right, my dear. If I could only persuade those who can't afford to get every thing, to dispense with new outside garments, and furnish themselves with plenty of flannel, I would promise

* A friend of mine proposes that New-England artists should paint the goddess of health with flannel drawers in her hand.

to save them half their doctors' bills." The doctor then proceeded to a prescription which, at first, seemed very extraordinary to Charlotte; but he urged it so strenuously, and told her that he knew it from experience to be of the first importance in preserving the health of the healthy, and strengthening the invalid, that she resolved, whatever trouble it might cost her, to follow strictly his advice. This advice was, that she should every day bathe her whole person in cold water, and rub her skin till it was dry and warm. He knew she had not conveniences for bathing, but this might be effected with a tub, or even a basin of water, and a sponge. Charlotte afterward, and after long experience, acknowledged that this simple prescription had done her more good than all the medicine she had ever taken. Finally, the doctor charged her not to wear at night the garments she wore in the day; not to make up her bed till it was thoroughly aired; not to be afraid of fresh air; to let plenty of it into the house; and especially, if at any time she was so much indisposed as to be confined to her bed, to have the air of her room constantly changed. He said people suffered more from inattention to cleanliness and fresh air, than from any necessary physical evils. "I cannot," he said, in conclusion, "but observe the goodness of Providence in making those things which are essential to health accessible to all; I mean, to all the native population of our country; for they can have all that I have prescribed for you, Miss Charlotte abundance of simple, nourishing food, warm garments, plenty of clean water, and pure air; the

two last articles, more valuable than all the gold of Peru, are sadly undervalued and neglected."

At first it must be confessed that Charlotte was disappointed that the doctor prescribed no medicine, no plaster, nothing from which she might expect sudden relief; but she soon looked calmly and submissively at the case as it was, and received most thankfully the prospect of alleviation. Dr. ——— inspired her with entire confidence; and afterward, in relating the story to Susan and Harry of her long interviews with him, she said it seemed to her mysterious he took such an interest in her. To them it did not, nor could it to any one who knew the sweetly patient sufferer, nor to any one who knew Dr. ———, and knew that he valued his profession chiefly as enlarging his means of doing moral and physical good to his fellow-creatures.

"And only think," said Charlotte, in conclusion, taking from her trunk a note which she had wrapped in her handkerchief, that it might get no spot or blemish on it, "only think, after all, after his coming to see me six times, and staying as long as if he had been a common doctor, and had not any other patient, only think of his sending me this billet at last."

In justice to Charlotte, we shall first give her note to the doctor, as we think it marks the dignity integrity, and simplicity of her character.

"HONOURED SIR—As father and I have concluded to leave to-morrow, will be much obliged if you will send in your bill this afternoon, if convenient. As, from all that's passed, sir, you may con-

clude that I ain't in circumstances to pay down, I would make bold to say that you need not scruple, as I have a large sum of money by me, given to me by my best friend, father and Susan excepted. Father sends his respectful duty to you, sir, and I mine, with many thanks ; but neither money nor thanks can pay your kindness ; and daily, respected sir, shall I ease my heart by remembering you in my prayers at the throne of grace, where we must all appear alike poor and needy, but where may you ever come with a sure foundation of hope, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

“ I remain, sir, your faithful friend and well wisher,
CHARLOTTE MAY.”

To which note the doctor replied—

“ MY GOOD FRIEND CHARLOTTE—I shall preface my answer to your note with letting you a little into my professional affairs. I do not make it a rule to attend the poor gratuitously, for many reasons ; but principally because I have observed that what is got for nothing is seldom valued. I only take care to charge them according to their ability to pay. You, my child, are an exception to most of my patients—you have given me a lesson of meek and cheerful submission that is inestimable—I am your debtor, not you mine. Besides, strictly, I have no *doctor's* account against you. I have prescribed no medicine, and given you no advice that any man of sense and experience might not have given ; therefore, my good girl, I have no claim on that ‘ *large sum of money,*’ which, God bless your ‘best friend’ for having given you. But forget

not, my friend, your promise to remember me in your prayers; I have much faith in the 'prayers of saints.' My parting regards to your good father, and please deliver the accompanying parcels as directed. They are from my son and daughter, who hastily join me in esteem for you and yours. God bless you, my dear child.

"Your sincere friend,

One parcel was directed "To Miss Charlotte May's *sister Susy*," and the other, "To Miss Charlotte May's '*best friend, father and Susy excepted.*'" The contents of Susan's parcel proved to be material for a nice winter dress (which, on measurement, turned out an abundance for two); and Harry's that capital manual for Americans, *Selections from the Works of Franklin*. Those who have returned from a journey with love-tokens in the trunk for the dear ones at home, can sympathize in the pleasure and gratitude of our humble friends.

One word more, and the affair of the journey is finished. Twenty dollars were left of Harry's gift after all the expenses of the journey were paid. It cannot be doubted that, as Charlotte said, "fifty dollars is a great sum" in the hands of the frugal poor. Charlotte offered him the balance as of course his; and, when he declined it, insisted, till he, a little hurt, said—

"Why, Lottie, I should feel just as bad as they would in old times, if they had taken back a gift they had laid on the Lord's altar; but I'll take the money to father to put out for you."

This was agreed on ; and, being fortunately invested, it amounted in a few years to a hundred dollars ; the income from it was seven a year, and this little sum gave to our frugal and liberal Charlotte more of the real enjoyment of property than is often derived from productive thousands. She had the luxury of giving, and the tranquillizing feeling that she had something in reserve for a wet day.

CHAPTER VI.

SHOWERS AND SUNSHINE.

WE pass over several years in the annals of our young friends. The current of their lives had flowed smoothly on. Charlotte, living in rigid obedience to the laws of health, as laid down and expounded by Dr. ———, and to the laws of heaven, as applied by her faithful conscience, had enjoyed a degree of health and comfort that she had not anticipated. Susan, at nineteen, was an accomplished tailoress ; and, what is most rare, her health and sunny cheerfulness had been in nowise impaired by her confinement to her needle. She was a singular union of sweet temper and efficiency ; and the only seamstress we ever heard of, that, for year after year, so far resisted the effects of sedentary employment as to sing at her work.

“What is the reason, Susan May,” said an acquaintance to her, “that you are always so well

and light-hearted ? Poor Sally Baker did not do as much work as you, and yet the doctors said it was sitting so steadily that brought on her dyspepsy ; and only see Jane Mills, she is a sight to behold ! and nothing but sewing, the doctors say.”

“ Nothing but sewing, they may say, Adeline . Sally Baker used to sit in her little stove-room from morning till night, and never let in any fresh air any more than if it were poison : poor Jane did get a little walk when she went to her place in the morning, but she was always behindhand with her work ; never could say no, and would set up half the night to oblige her customers ; and, after all, was tormented to death with reproaches for broken promises ; and then, when her appetite failed, she used to live on pies, and cakes, and such trash. As Lottie’s doctor told her, God has written laws in our constitutions, and if we break them we must pay for it.”

“ But how do you manage, Susan—your cheeks are as fresh as roses ?”

“ I began, Adeline, with an excellent constitution ; and Lottie, knowing the value of health, watched over it. She made me follow her New-York doctor’s rules about washing myself.”

“ Washing yourself ! I should like to know if everybody don’t wash themselves ; I am sure Sally Baker, and Jane Mills too, were neat as pinks.”

“ So they were, Adeline ; but few even of neat people know the importance of daily bathing the whole person, and rubbing it smartly with a coarse cloth.”

“ That’s what I call superstition.”

“ You may call it what you please, Adeline ; but I believe that, and changing my clothes, airing the bed, and the house, and room, have kept my cheeks, as you say, fresh as roses. Lottie never lets me sit more than two hours at a time at my needle ; she calls me to do a *chore*, or run of an errand. She will not let me pass one day, rain or shine, without exercise in the open air. Neither cold, wet, nor heat hurts me. As to my lightheartedness, Adeline, that’s natural to me ; but Lottie has helped to keep that up too, by taking care that I don’t get fretted at by my customers. She never would let me make a promise that I was not sure of performing. I often get my work done beforehand, and I take pains to fit and please, and somehow I think our Essex folks are easy to please ; and smiles beget smiles, you know—if they are pleased, I am. And then it’s such a heart-comfort to keep the family together, now father is getting old and feeble.”

“ After all, Susan, I guess,” said her visiter, with an ominous contraction of the lips, “ you’ll not always be so lighthearted.”

“ Maybe not ; but I don’t believe in borrowing trouble.”

“ It may come without borrowing—they say it’s a bad sign to feel too well.”

“ I don’t believe in signs, Adeline.”

“ You may—they say everybody believes prophecy after it comes to pass.”

“ Do you mean any thing in particular ?” asked Susan, struck more by her companion’s tone than her words ; “ if you do, pray speak out.”

“ Have you seen Paulina Clark ?”

“ Paulina Clark ! is she in Essex ? ”

“ Yes ; her mother’s husband is dead, and they have come back here to live ; and they say the old man left the widow a fortune ; and Paulina is dressed as if it was true—all in fine bombasin, and a crape veil down to her feet, and a black bead bag, and every thing answerable ; though you know she did not scruple to say she hated the old man while he was alive.”

“ I am sorry she behaves so unbecomingly ; she was always fond of outside show, Paulina ; but I remember Harry used to say that was natural, she was so handsome.”

“ Don’t you think it strange, Susan, that some people can be so taken up with beauty ? ”

“ Oh, I don’t know ; I like to look at every thing that is beautiful.”

“ But should you think that such a person as Harry Aikin would put beauty before every thing ? ”

“ I don’t think he does,” replied Susan, keeping her eyes steadfastly to her work, and slightly blushing.

“ Well, I don’t know whether it is the beauty or the fortune ; but it must be one or the other, or both—for I am sure, in other respects, you are far enough before Paulina Clark ; and everybody thought Harry was paying attention to you before he left Essex.”

“ Harry was always like a brother to Charlotte and me,” replied Susan, her voice a little tremulous.

“ Like a brother to Charlotte he might have been ; but he was more like something else to you, and everybody thought so ”

“Everybody don’t know every thing,” rejoined Susan, her eyes still riveted to her work, and her heart throbbing so that it seemed to her her companion must hear it.

“Well, now,” continued the persevering gossip, “Susan May, be candid, and own, if you should hear that Harry Aikin was going to marry Paulina Clark, should not you feel as if he had deceived you?”

“No,” replied Susan, now speaking firmly, and looking her companion full in the face; “if all the world, and Charlotte, thought Harry paid me particular attention—and if I sometimes had thought so too, and if he marries Paulina Clark to-morrow, I should think we were all mistaken, and Harry true-hearted.”

“Well, you’ll be put to the trial, for Paulina as good as owned to me her expectations; but I am sorry for your disappointment, for you can’t but say ’tis a disappointment.” Susan said nothing, and her tormentor proceeded. “It’s nothing new nor strange; them that has not any interest* must expect to be slighted; and I have often heard that when young men get to New-York, all they think of is making money, and getting a wife that will make a show with it; and you say yourself that Harry thought Paulina a beauty.”

Susan made no reply, and Adeline, having succeeded in making her uncomfortable, began to feel very much so herself, from the effect of Susan’s quiet dignity; and, much to Susan’s satisfaction, she cut short her visit and disappeared. When

* Interest is, in rustic sense, property.

Charlotte entered a few moments after, she found Susan's work had dropped on the floor, and she was leaning her head on the chair and sobbing. This was a strange sight ; for, let the clouds be ever so heavy, there was always a glimmering of blue sky where Susan was.

Inquiries and explanations followed. Susan's heart was turned inside out ; not a thought, feeling, prostrate hope, or piercing regret, was concealed from Charlotte, who, though in a more subdued manner, was scarcely less grieved than Susan.

When they could talk calmly about it, Susan said, "Come what will, I never shall blame Harry in the least. You know how many times he has said we were just like *sisters* to him ; and it was perfectly natural, when he went to live in New-York, he should like people that had New-York ways."

"But, Susan, it does seem to me strange that Harry should ever fancy Paulina ; she has not his ways of thinking, or acting, or feeling."

"Oh, Lottie, Paulina is handsome—they say the best of men are carried away with beauty."

"Not Harry, I am sure ; and, besides, I have heard him say—I never told you, because I did not want to flatter you—but I heard him say, when we went to hear Squire Willard's fourth of July oration—the day Paulina wore that new pink satin bonnet—and somebody said Squire Willard never took his eyes from her all the time he was speaking—"

"What did Harry say, Charlotte ?"

"Harry whispered to me, and said he liked your looks a thousand times better than Paulina's."

“Did he? did he?—he would not say so now!”

“Maybe not. I shall always think, if he had not gone to New-York, that would have come to pass that we expected; but I believe, Susy, it is very hard to keep from being worldly-minded in a city. When I was in New-York, as I have often told you, the chief conversation was about dress and making money. Oh how I did long to hear something about something profitable. You know I never was in favour of Harry’s going there—I never liked his going into partnership with Morris Finley—he’d better have sat over his lapstone the rest of his life.”

“But, Lottie, you forget the weakness in his breast.”

“I do—that was a good reason for giving up his trade, but not for going to New-York.”

“Yes, but you forget what flattering prospects he had; and,” she added, with a sigh, “after his parents’ death, he had not much to keep him here; and, having all his portion of the estate in money, he thought it would enable him to carry on business to the greatest advantage in New-York. He explained all this to our satisfaction then.”

“Yes; and when he told us about his plans, and seemed to be in such a hurry to get ahead, I was sure he was hinting at sharing with you, though he did not seem to think it best to speak out.”

“I thought so too, Lottie; but I know I was very much to blame for setting my heart that way, when I had no more reason; and then, his always writing and sending something by every opportunity—to be sure, the letters were directed to you, but somehow they always seemed written to *me*;

and then he was sure to send some present that he knew I should like better than any thing else in the world ; but it's now a long, long time since we have heard from him, and yet we never suspected any thing."

"No, Susy, because we never in our lives suspected Harry could do any but the right thing. It will be very hard to make up our minds to see him Paulina's husband."

"Harry Paulina's husband ! Oh, it's awful to think of ! But, if she were only worthy of him—if she could make him happy, I could be as—happy, I was going to say, but that would not be true—but I could be contented for myself and thankful for him."

Both sisters were silent for a few moments, when Charlotte said—

"If we can't have things right in this world, we can have right feelings ; let us kneel down and pray together, Susan."

"Oh, yes, Lottie, that is always a comfort."

The sisters knelt, locked in each other's arms. Charlotte was the organ of both their hearts, and most earnestly did she pray that they might walk together in integrity and thankfulness in whatsoever path it should please the Almighty to mark out for them, even were it through a solitary wilderness ; that they might remember that their Lord and Master did not promise his followers their portion in this world ; that they might humbly and faithfully do the duty appointed them, and not repine because they could not choose what that duty should be.

She poured forth an earnest petition for their

best friend ; that he might be directed aright ; that he might be delivered from the many evils and temptations that surrounded him ; and that she with whom his heart was knit might have the grace as well as the gifts of God.

When their heart-service was over, Susan said she felt as if a load were taken from her. "He," she said to Charlotte, "who commanded us to pray for our enemies, certainly knew what was in us : how differently we feel towards any one we earnestly pray for !"

From this time there was no apparent change in the sisters, except that Susan pursued her labours with even more than usual avidity, and sometimes a remark would escape from her that showed the course of her thoughts ; such as, "I am sure, Charlotte, of having enough to do in this world, and that's a real comfort ; for one can't be very unhappy while there is enough to do."

That Adeline's prophecy was verified, was obvious ; a portion of her lightheartedness was gone, and even Uncle Phil remarked that "she did not sing as she used to ;" he "wished she would ; he had rather hear her than a bird." Meanwhile Charlotte watched her with a blending of the sister's sympathy, and the mother's tenderness ; and daily, as she saw that Susan's resolution was carrying her serenely through the storm, did she offer her humble thanksgiving to Him who she knew was the source of her strength and peace.

CHAPTER VII.

LOVE-LETTERS.

THREE weeks passed away, and nothing more was heard of Adeline's news, save that once, when Paulina, in Susan's presence, was bantered about the house of "Finley and Aikin," she tittered and bridled her head, and had all the airs of a spoiled girl who is rallied about her lover; and save that, when Paulina, after a month's mourning, doffed her crape bonnet and veil, and put on a pink hat with artificial flowers, the premature transition was imputed to an approaching wedding, and not to the obvious and perfectly sufficient cause—the pretty girl's extravagant love of dress.

At last Uncle Phil brought home that rare blessing to our simple friends, a letter, from the post-office.

"Here's something for you, gals," said he, "as scarce as gold now-a-days—a letter from Harry."

"Oh, better than gold!" said Charlotte, holding out her hand.

"No, no, it's Susy's this time; why don't you jump, Susy?"

Susan moved slowly, and took it with a trembling hand. Her fears, she thought, now were to become certainty.

"What are you afraid of, child?" continued her father; "there can't be any bad news in it, 'cause

it's got a red wafer ; and besides, Harry writ it himself. Give it to me—no, I have broken my spectacles—you read it, Lottie.”

“ Yes, so do, Lottie,” said Susan ; “ I want to see if my iron is hot.”

“ That beats the Dutch,” said Uncle Phil ; “ if I had twenty irons in the fire I should let them burn to hear news from Harry.”

Poor Susan ! we hope our readers will excuse her for giving a false gloss once in her life. “ I can bear any thing,” so she thought, “ if I am alone with Lottie, and she first sees it.” Her sister soon followed her with the open letter.

“ Bad news, Susy,” she said, “ but not what we expected.”

“ Then it can't be very bad,” exclaimed Susan, the clouds vanishing from her face ; she seized the letter, and read as follows :—

MY DEAR SUSAN—It is a long time since I have written to you ; but I have been in much perplexity and anxiety, and have been waiting to see daylight. We have failed, Finley and I, as might have been expected ; neither of us having any experience in the business we undertook. As soon as I found we could not meet our notes, I made a thorough examination into our affairs, and found we could just pay our debts and no more. So to-morrow we close the concern. I have many times regretted I did not take Charlotte's advice, and not enter into a business for which I was not qualified. I would now gladly return to my trade, but confinement to business, and anxiety, have had an unfavourable effect on my health, and I am more

than ever troubled with that old pain in my breast. I sometimes think, Susan, a sight of your sunny face would cure me ; that and all good things I trust will come ; in the meantime, patience. In prosperity and adversity, my heart ever turns towards my dear Essex friends, who must believe me their friend and brother,

“HARRY AIKIN.”

“I never did fully believe it !” exclaimed Susan, as she closed the letter.

“Believe what ?”

Susan blushed. “You know what, Lottie.” Charlotte smiled. “Are you not sorry for Harry’s failure ?” she asked.

“Oh, yes—sorry ? No—no, I am not sorry for any thing just at this moment,” and Susan covered her face with her hand for joy. Then, dashing off her hair, she read the letter again. “My dear Susan, I have just received your letter, and I am very glad to hear from you. I am sorry to hear of Harry’s failure, but I am not surprised. He has always been a very imprudent man, and I am sure his letter gave no details, for he never wrote his own praises, even indirectly. “Not he that commendeth himself is approved.”

When, at the close of their second year’s partnership, he ascertained the unfavourable condition of their affairs, he insisted on making them known at once to their creditors, that they might suffer the least possible inconvenience from the failure of punctual payment. Morris Finley remonstrated. He saw, or affected to see, flattering prospects ahead ; and at last, when Harry absolutely refused to go on, Morris insisted on making a compromise

with their creditors. He adduced case upon case where this had been done in similar circumstances, and a pretty penny saved, and no reputation lost. Harry would not listen to his proposition. He said, the frequency of such proceedings was an argument in his mind against them. He would not add his mite to sully the mercantile reputation of his country; and that if, by the arrangement Finley proposed, he did not lose his good name, he should lose his self-respect, which was still dearer to him. The inflexibly honest man is unmanageable, and Finley was at last compelled to yield. They stopped in time to pay every penny of their debts, and retain the respect of their creditors; and Harry began the world anew, with fresh vigour, springing from a conscience void of offence. Morris profited by Harry's firmness. One of their creditors, struck by the honesty of the firm, and giving the parties equal credit for it, offered Finley an employment which, as he afterward said, was the first rung of the ladder on which he mounted to fortune.

Some months passed away, and Paulina continued to be a belle in Essex, and flattered by young men of every degree. The report of her engagement to Harry was found to have arisen from the devotions of his partner, Morris Finley, to her. These devotions were abated by a third marriage of Paulina's mother, by which she put into the hands of a young spendthrift some fifteen thousand dollars, received from her last doting and deluded husband. Paulina seemed at first much affected by Finley's desertion; but, after a while, she turned to other lovers; and, when her mother's young

husband deserted and left her penniless, both mother and daughter returned to New-York and opened a milliner's shop: the mother soon after died. It was said that Paulina removed to Philadelphia; but, though unfavourable reports reached Essex concerning her, nothing was certainly known.

In the meantime, save two or three short letters by private opportunities (for our friends could not afford the luxury of post intercourse), the sisters heard nothing from Harry till the following letter arrived.

“DEAR SUSAN—My prospects, since the break-up last spring, are much improved; but particulars in my next. All I want to know is, whether you will share my lot with me? Pray write by return of post, and believe me now, as you well know I have ever been, though I never put it into words before, your friend and true lover,

“HARRY AIKIN.

“P. S.—I know, dear Susan, you are not a person to take or refuse a husband for any thing separate from himself; but I may mislead you by what I said above. I am still what the world calls a poor man—particulars in my next.”

Susan's first sensations on reading Harry's letter were those of perfect and unlimited happiness. “I always felt,” she said to Charlotte, “as if I knew he loved me; and now I wonder I let Adeline's story trouble me for one moment.”

Again and again the sisters read over Harry's letter; Charlotte seeming, in her own quiet way,

scarcely less happy than Susan. Early in the evening Charlotte went to her own room. Uncle Phil made it a rule to go to bed when the fowls went to roost (there was no faint resemblance in their degree of intellectual life), and Susan was left in possession of their little sitting-room to pour out her overflowing heart in a letter to Harry. It was a letter befitting the frank and feeling creature who wrote it; and such a letter as any lover would be enraptured to receive. When she went to her room, Charlotte was not in bed, but just rising from her knees; she smiled as she turned towards Susan, and Susan saw that her cheeks were wet with tears.

“Why, what’s the matter, Lottie?” she asked.

“I have been trying, Susy, to get courage to look into the future.” Her voice faltered as she added, “The time is coming when we must separate.”

“Oh, Lottie, I never thought of that! how could I be so selfish!” All the castles she had been building in the air fell at once to the ground. Her first impulse was to say—“No, I will never leave you, Lottie.”

But she had just written a promise to Harry to be his; and she was silent, and quite as sorrowful as Charlotte at the conviction that for the first time in their lives, their interests were divided. Hour after hour she was restless and thoughtful; at last she came to a conclusion, sad enough in some of its aspects, but it tranquillized her. She nestled up to her sister, put her arm over her, and fell asleep, repeating to herself, “It’s a comfort, any how, to resolve to do right.” Well may reflection be called an angel, when it suggests duties, and

calls into action principles strong enough to meet them. Before Susan closed her letter, she made the following addition :—

“ P. S.—DEAR HARRY—I wrote this letter last evening, and shall send it ; for why should I, if I could, conceal my real feelings from you ? Since we were playfellows at school, I have loved you best, and you only, Harry ; for the time to come, I must love you only as a brother. Oh, how strange it is, that the black and the white threads are always twisted together in human life. Last evening I was so happy writing this letter ; but, when I went into the bedroom, Lottie’s face was covered with tears ; and she spoke of our separation, and all flashed upon me at once. What could she and father do without me ? They do now their full part towards keeping the family together, but they can neither of them bring in any thing, and they would be obliged to look to the town for support. Is not that awful to think of ? So you see, dear Harry, I *cannot* leave them—our path is plain, and, as dear Lottie would say, may we have grace to walk therein. It is very dark now, Harry ; but, if we only try to do right, the day will soon break, and grow brighter and brighter. Please don’t say one word to persuade me off my resolution, for we are weak creatures at best, and we should stand together, and strengthen and uphold one another. Above all, don’t say a word about my reasons to father and Lottie ; and believe me, dear Harry, not a bit less your affectionate friend because I can’t forsake them.

“ SUSAN MAY.”

By return of post came the following answer from Harry :—

“DEAREST SUSAN—Forsake ‘father and Lottie!’ that you never shall. When I wrote my last, it was only to get that blessed little word *yes* from you, for I must make sure of my title before I laid out the future. One thing only I am a little hurt at. Could you think I could leave out Charlotte in my plans?—a dear sister, counsellor, and friend she has ever been to me—and your good father, who so much needs some one to care for him? Ah, Susan, I have had my *reflections* too; and I think our path is plain before us, and, with good resolution on our part, and Charlotte’s prayers to help us, we *shall have* grace to walk therein. But I must tell you all, and then look for your final answer.

“When I invested my patrimony in the shoe concern with Finley, I expected soon to be in a situation to offer you my hand, and begin house-keeping in New-York with four members to the family, for never once have I thought of dividing you from your father and Lottie. I did not tell you my hopes and plans, because I feared I should not after that have patience to wait as long as prudence required. One thing I am sure of, dear Susan, from my own experience—that a virtuous love is the greatest earthly security a young man can have against the temptations and dangers that beset him. I am sure my affection for you has made me diligent in business, frugal, earnest in my pursuits, and patient in my disappointments. If I had felt (which, thank God, I never did) any inclination to forbidden pleasures, to dangerous company, to dissipation of

any sort, the thought of you would have been a shield to me. Knowing you and Charlotte so well, and the memory of my excellent mother, have given me a reverence for female virtue—a belief in the power and beauty of goodness in a woman—and to this, Susan, love naturally follows—that pure love that is ordained by God to lead to the holy institution of marriage.—But what are my thoughts running to? Don't laugh at me, and I will go back to my business statements.

“When I began business I took lodgings at a carman's. He is a good friend of mine, and with him I could live at a small expense in a quiet family. I have avoided living or associating with those who had more means than I, for that leads to expense. I have never spent a shilling on superfluities, for which I have now much reason to be thankful; for, even if I had escaped that dreadful load, unpaid debts, I might, like many other young men, have acquired habits of expense on the credit of future gains. The gains may not come—the habits remain, like so many tormentors. When I was asked by a friend to go to an oyster-house, or the theatre, or the circus, or to take a bottle of porter, or drink a glass of whiskey, I declined. I knew, if I did it for my friend's sake this time, I might do it for my own the next. I had my *treats*—my pleasant thoughts of the time when I should have a table of my own, and faces round it that I loved. It is sure we can't have every thing in this world, and the thing is to make up our mind what we *must have*, and what we can do without. You can guess my *must have*.

“When I found Finley and I were going behind-

hand, I determined to stop short, and not, as many do, put off the evil day, plunging deeper and deeper, making enemies, and making plenty of work for repentance. When our affairs were settled up I had a hundred dollars in my pocket, and no one to look me in the face and say I owed him a shilling, or had wronged him of one. The next thing was to determine on what business I should follow. You know my breast was much weakened by sitting over my lapstone when I was growing fast. It is a bad trade to put a growing boy to. I could not return to it. A farm in one of the free western states seemed to me the happiest lot in the world for a poor man; but there were hardships in the beginning, and, though you and I would not have minded them, your father and Lottie could not have stood them. A farm at Essex I dared not think of: a man must have some capital and knowledge, practice and skill, to go ahead in New-England on a farm, and I had none of these. While I was deliberating, my good friend Mr. Loomis, the carman, determined to move to Ohio. He advised me to take up his business, and offered to sell me his horse and cart on very reasonable terms, and to recommend me to his employers. There were many reasons to decide me to take his advice. I find exercise in the open air the best medicine for the pain in my breast. Carting is a sure and regular business. I have observed that the carmen in this city, those *whose carts are never seen standing before groceries*, are a healthy, cheerful-looking class of men. They go slowly but surely ahead. They can generally manage to take their meals with their families, and to spend all their evenings

at home—a great point to a man who loves home faces and home pleasures as I do. Some persons think it is going down a step to go from shop-keeping to carting ; but you and I, Susan, have our own notions about going up and down, and both think it is what is in a man, and not what is out of him, that humbles or exalts him. Some think that most genteel which brings them nearest to being idle gentlemen ; but, when I am driving through Broadway on my cart, do you think I would change places with those slim-looking young men I see parading up and down the street, looking like tailors' walking advertisements—bringing nothing to pass—doing nothing with the time God gives them in this world, and gives them—*for what?* Oh, it would take a minister to answer that.

“I might have gone into trade of some kind, but I have not health to be shut up behind a counter ; and besides, in my opinion, a shop is a fitting place for women only, they being (don't be affronted, Susy) the weaker sex. You see now how my case stands. I have no debts. I have good health for the business I have chosen, industry, and a *faculty* I may boast. So I think I may marry in this blessed country of ours, where there is sure employment, and a man is certain of getting his earnings. Besides, dear Susan, if any thing happens to me, you have your trade to depend upon. Give my best love to Charlotte, and tell her, besides being a main comfort, she will be a real help to us ; for while she is doing the light work, your needle will be making money. If your father has any scruples about coming, pray tell him the rent of his Essex place will pay for the rent of a room here.

and save us from near neighbours we may not like. Am I not *calculating*, Susan? But is it not better to calculate beforehand than to grumble afterward? I am sure I am right, so far as I can, to secure independence to your father and Charlotte; and if, after all, they must take something from us, those who are so generous in giving will be also generous in receiving, and they will not grudge us the best part, it being more blessed to give than to receive.

“There is one thing I can scarcely bear the thoughts of—taking you all from that pleasant little spot in Essex, where you have *riches* for the eye that all the money in New-York cannot buy *in* the city—plenty of sweet air and pure water;* and your garden, and your little courtyard, with its rose-bushes, morning-glories, pionies, and marvels of Peru. But, after all, dear Susan, there are feelings worth giving up the very best of outward things for; and if we secure affection, and kindness, and so forth, we sha’n’t have made a bad bargain of it, shall we? We may be what the world calls poor, and miscals, in my estimation. Let us begin, in the fear and love of God, with a determination to do our duty—rich in love for one another, and at peace with all men; and if worst comes to worst, why, that will be *outside* poverty. I do not fear it, do you? Answer this without fail by return of post. Much duty and love to your

* Has any one ever calculated the amount of wealth and comfort to be produced to the labouring classes by the introduction of pure water into the city of New-York? Health and cleanliness are sources of wealth, and of comfort inappreciable.

(my?) father and Charlotte, and believe me, till death, your friend and lover,

“HARRY AIKIN.

“P. S.—I was so taken up with one subject that I forgot to mention that Finley was married last evening to a Miss Nichols. Her father entered into speculation last winter, and is said to be rich. Finley says he never gave Paulina Clark reason to expect to marry him; perhaps not in words; but, the old proverb is, ‘actions speak loudest.’ To my mind, a man who *attends* to a girl, and then quits her, adds hypocrisy to falsehood. I foresaw how this matter would end when I heard that Paulina’s mother had made that *third* marriage. Finley would have liked a handsome wife, but he *must have* a rich one. He has set out in the world for what he calls the *main chance*; I have my *main chance* too, and that depends on you. Poor Paulina! But I’ll not tell bad news (which may not be true) *in this letter*.
H. A.”

Morris Finley and Harry Aikin had begun life with objects diametrically opposite, and were destined to illustrate that saying, as true now as when, ages ago, it was first uttered:—“*There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing—there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches*”

CHAPTER VIII.

A PEEP INTO THE POOR RICH MAN'S HOUSE.

As our readers may have anticipated, Susan at once entered into Harry's views ; and, in a short time, she and her family were transferred to a part of a small house in Broome-street, in New-York. One room served as kitchen, parlour, and bedroom. It was furnished only with articles of the first necessity. There was a snug little bedroom for Uncle Phil, which he said suited him exactly ; and a comfortable, good-sized one for Charlotte, with a neat rag carpet on it, "because Lottie suffered with cold feet ;" and a fireplace in it, "for Lottie must have a fire when she had sick turns ;" and two windows, "for all Lottie's living was fresh air ;" and the only bureau and the only rocking-chair were in Charlotte's room, because, as she said, "Susy had always some good reason at hand for giving her the best of every thing."

Our friends were undeniably what the world calls poor. But they had affection, intelligence, temperance, contentment, and godliness. Were they poor ? We shall see. In the meantime, let us see if there is not some misuse of terms in this world. Morris Finley had "got in on the world." He had so far secured his *main chance*, that he was engaged in profitable business. He lived in

a good house, fashionably furnished; and his wife, like the wives of other flourishing young merchants, dressed in expensive materials, made in the latest fashion. Neither Morris nor his wife was vicious. They were *only* selfish and ostentatious, with unfurnished minds, and hearts as empty as their purses were full.

"Husband," said Mrs. Finley to her partner, who had just come home from Wall-street to dinner, his mind engrossed with some unaccountable rise in the stocks. "Husband, mother has been here."

"Well, what of that?"

"She has given up her house."

"What of that?"

"Why, you know what of that as well as I do; she does not know what she is to do next."

We must premise that Finley's father-in-law had made some unfortunate, as well as fortunate speculations; had died, and left his wife and an unmarried daughter penniless.

"I am sure I cannot say what she is to do next," replied Finley; "she is lucky to have one daughter well provided for. What does she propose?"

"She did not propose any thing. She sat and cried the whole morning."

"Of course she cannot expect to have a home here."

"Of course not. I told her, said I, 'Mother, if I were to ask husband to invite you here, we could not accommodate you, for we have not a room to spare: you know we must eat in the basement, to keep the parlours in order for company; and in the second story there is only the nursery and our bed-

chamber; and one of the third-story rooms we must keep for a spare room; and, when Sabina Jane gets to be a little older, she must have the back upper chamber; and so,' said I, 'mother, you see, if husband were perfectly willing, it is impossible.'"

"She could not have expected it."

"Oh, no, she did not; but, then, a mother is a mother, you know, and I did not wish to hurt her feelings."

"I presume, my dear, Helen Maria can get a place as governess or teacher in a school; I heard her say she had attended to music and painting, and French, and so on, at Mrs. ——'s school, for the last six years."

"So she has, husband; but, bless you! you know how girls learn things at school, and she never expected to have to teach."

"Expect or not expect, I'd get my money's worth out of these schools. I saw, on your father's books, three hundred dollars a year paid for Helen Maria's schooling for the last six years, and this is what it has come to. Can't she teach geography, or arithmetic, or some of them useful branches?"

"No, she never was fond of the useful branches; she had quite a pretty taste for music and painting, but then people are required to understand them so well to teach them. No, I don't see as Helen Maria can earn any thing but by embroidering muslin; she does that beautifully; and if there was only a place where work might be sold without it being known where it came from, she might earn considerable, and no one be the wiser for it."

“Nonsense, wife! We have not yet got above our relations’ working for their living, though you may not be obliged to. Why can’t your mother take a boarding-house, and then Helen Maria might assist her?”

“Oh! Helen Maria can’t do any kind of house-work; besides, she is delicate, you know. Now mother was brought up to it; and when I proposed a boarding-house, she said if she had any security to offer for her rent—”

“Ah! there’s the rub! I hope she don’t expect me to offer; for you know, my dear, I make it an invariable rule never to endorse, but in the way of business, for those who endorse for me.”

“What is to be done, husband, if she can’t get into any way of supporting herself? She must live, you know.”

‘And I must support her, hey?’

“No, I did not say that; but we can’t let her suffer. What would people say?—there are always enough to talk, you know.”

“Yes, yes: well, I suppose I must advance the first quarter’s rent, or something towards it. Oh! a thought strikes me; I know a house that will just suit, belonging to some old maid or widow, or somebody that lives up the country. The man that has the care of it ain’t particular about security. I’ll make the bargain for her—save her at least a hundred dollars. That’s just as good to her as if I took the money out of my purse and put it into hers. I am glad to do your mother a good turn now and then in this way. I ain’t one that holds to shirking poor relations.”

“Nor I, I am sure, and I told mother so;

but I told her not to look to you ; for, says I, mother, you know we have a very expensive family, and there are certain things we must have, and husband says he will always keep on the safe side."

" Yes, trust Morris Finley for that. Folks that mean to go ahead in the world must avoid unnecessary expenses. Has the man been here about the curtains ?"

" Yes ; and I find the fawn, with blue borders, cost, for each window, twenty dollars more than the others."

" Bless my soul ! how is that ?"

" The fixtures are very showy and expensive—I don't make a point of those—but the blue and fawn is such a lovely contrast, and such a match for my carpet. If there's any thing I do care about, it's a match."

" But the price, wife, is enormous."

" But it is not more than Mrs. Johnson Smith gave for hers."

" Are you sure of that ?"

" Positive ; Miss Saltus told me so, and Miss Saltus made them up. I should not depend on what Mrs. Johnson Smith said, for she always makes it out that her things cost more than anybody else's ; but I can rely on Miss Saltus."

" Well, if that's the case, take the blue and fawn. I hope I can afford what Johnson Smith can ; but mind and make your bargain with that Saltus woman beforehand ; work is slack just now and she can't afford to lie by with that old blind mother on her hands. Get your work done as well and as cheap as you can ; for, remember, *we*

must avoid all unnecessary expenses. But what keeps the dinner, my dear?"

"I am sure I don't know, my dear; I have been out making visits all the morning. Servants are good for nothing now-a-days—always trifling away their time."

"What ails Sabina Jane? seems to me she does nothing but bawl."

Mrs. Finley opened the door to inquire, and in rushed a pale little girl, with a bit of plum-cake in her hand.

"Take care, Judy," said the mother, picking up the crumbs the child profusely scattered; "you should not let Sabina Jane come into the parlour—it's no place for children."

"She would come, ma'am."

"Oh, Sabina Jane, my darling, go back to the nursery, that's a good child."

"I won't, I won't!"

Mrs. Finley, in a low voice to the nurse—"Coax her, Judy—tell her you'll take her out to walk."

"I can't take her out, ma'am—my foot is lame."

"Oh, only just tell her so, to pacify her. Stop, Sabina Jane, and listen to mother; Sabina Jane shall go out walking in Broadway, and have on her pretty velvet cap, and her cloak, all trimmed with pink—there, that's a good girl! now she'll go with Judy. Get out her things, Judy—make her look like a little beauty!"

The little dupe returned to the nursery, and in two minutes was bawling louder than ever, having been quieted just that time by her mother's precious lesson in lying and vanity.

CHAPTER IX.

A PEEP INTO THE RICH POOR MAN'S HOUSE.

SEVEN years had not passed over without those precious accumulations to Aikin that constitute the poor man's wealth ; for, save a conscience void of offence, there is no treasure comparable to healthy, bright, well-trained children. Our friend Harry and his wife had kept the even tenour of their way—no uncommon event had happened to them ; but, as the river of life glides through a varied country, the aspect of their's now varied from what it was when we last saw them.

The floor of the room was partly covered with a carpet, and the part visible as clean as hands could make it. It was summer, and the blinds were closed, admitting only light enough to enable the persons within to carry on their occupations. Uncle Phil is sitting by the half-opened window, with a year-old baby on his lap, telling over on its toes that charming lyric, "this pig went to market, and that pig stayed at home"—Aunt Lottie was preparing a pot of wholesome soup, which, like a judicious housewife, having boiled the day before, she was freeing from every particle of fat—a little girl, six years old, was tacking worsted binding together for Venitian blinds, whereby she got from a manufacturer (working only at odd intervals)

half a dollar per week ; and at the same time teaching a sister, something more than two years younger, the multiplication-table—Susan Aikin sat by, her vigilant eye seeing every thing, and her kind voice interposing, as often as the wants or claims of the children rendered her interference necessary. Her most difficult duty seemed to be to keep in due order a restless, noisy little fellow, William, the twin brother of her eldest girl, whom she was teaching to write, while at the same time she was tailoring and instructing in her art a young girl, who had just set the last stitch in a vest of the most costly material, and was holding it up for inspection ; a slight anxiety, till she heard the approving word, tempering her conscious success. Susan scrutinized every part of it, every seam, button-hole, and button ; and then said—

“ There’s not a fault in it—I could not do one better myself, Agnes.”

Agnes burst into tears, Anne looked up from her work inquiringly ; little Mary exclaimed, “ Such a big girl cry !” Willie said, “ She is not *really* crying ;” and the baby stretched out its neck, and put up its lips to offer a kiss of consolation, which Agnes took, smiling through her tears, and saying, “ Oh, I’m only crying because your mother has been so good to me !”

“ Well,” shouted Willie, “ that’s a funny thing to cry for !”

“ That was not all, Willie,” said his mother ; “ Agnes cries because she has been good herself.”

“ That’s funnier yet ; we never cry only when we are naughty.”

Mrs. Aikin solved the riddle, and so will we

Agnes was the eldest child of a worthy and very poor neighbour of Mrs. Aikin. Her father had been disabled for some months, by falling from building, and had recently died; her mother had lost her health from over-exertion. Agnes had an idiot sister, and two brothers too young to render the family any assistance. Mrs. Aikin, foreseeing the distress of the family after they should have exhausted the father's earnings, and knowing that Agnes was a diligent and good girl, and had been well taught plain sewing in a public school, offered to instruct her in making vests, a very profitable business to those who are skilled in it, and can command work from the first merchant tailors. There were some obstacles in the way: Agnes could only be spared from home at odd intervals, and often only at times very inconvenient to Susan Aikin; but who, as Susan said, would ever do any good in this world if they made mountains of mole-hills? Those who saw her multiplied cares, her bee-like industry, would rather have said she made molehills of mountains. She always received Agnes with a smile, always found a quiet corner for her, and made leisure to attend to her. Agnes, seeing the efforts and sacrifices her kind friend made for her, set the right value upon the good she was obtaining, and performed her part with fidelity.

Many complaints are made of the low rates of women's wages—some just, no doubt; but, for the most part, they are paid according to their capacity. A well-qualified seamstress, tailoress, or milliner, can, except in very rare cases, obtain certain employment and good pay. A half-taught and

careless worker must take her chance for slop-work, at low wages. Susan Aikin could at all times command work from the most respectable houses, was sure of the highest wages, and incidental favours that she knew how to turn to account. "Now, Agnes, my child," she had said on the day previous to this on which we have introduced her young friend, "here is a trial vest for you; I have got leave from my employers to put it into your hands; you must set every stitch in it; and, if it is done to their satisfaction, you are to have as much of their best work as you can do, which is as good as a promise of six dollars a week to you—a sure support for your poor mother, and helpless sister, and little brothers. Better, my child, to trust to diligent, skilful hands, than to widows' societies, and assistance societies, and so on; leave those for such as can get nothing better, while we use the means of independence that Providence has given us."

"But if I should fail, Mrs. Aikin?"

"Why, then there is one comfort left, we can try again; but you will not fail."

Thus stimulated and encouraged, Agnes set to work, and, as has been seen, accomplished her task, and no wonder that she shed tears of joy when it was done. Which, we would ask, was happiest— which *richest*; he who paid fifteen dollars for the vest, or she who earned the dollar by making it, and thereby cheered the hearts of the desolate, and brought comfort and light to a dreary home? or, which is happiest—*richest*; she who is lapped in luxury, and is every day seeking some new and expensive pleasure, or those who, like our friend

Mrs. Aikin, in some obscure place, are using their faculties and seizing their opportunities of doing good, never to be known and praised by the world, but certainly recorded in the book of life?

While the vest was passing round to be examined and praised by Aunt Lottie, Uncle Phil, and all, for their joys were in common in this little family Aikin entered, and had his share in the general pleasure; but his brow soon clouded. Children are quick readers of faces they love.

"What is the matter, father?" asked Willie; "is that ugly pain in your breast come again?"

"No, something worse, Willie; a pain in my heart."

"What is the matter?" asked Susan, anxiously. Every eye now turned to Aikin.

"It's poor M'Elroy's troubles again. He called me in as I was passing. There lay his wife on the floor, dead drunk. Returning from the grocer's, she slipped down the cellar stairs, and is so black and bruised, her head so swollen, you would not know her. The children were crying, and he wringing his hands and saying, 'I can bear it no longer.' He, every week of his life, earns more than I do, and this bad woman wastes it. This comes of marrying a poor, ignorant, ill-brought-up girl, who had nothing but a pretty face to recommend her. M'Elroy says his children are going to destruction. She makes them play truant, sends them out begging, puts lies into their mouths, and, last and worse than all, gives them rum to drink."

"Dear me! dear me!" exclaimed Susan, "what can be done for them?"

“He says but one thing—he must turn her adrift; he has forgiven and forgiven till he is tired of it.”

“Ah, there is but one Being that is never tired of forgiving!”

“The poor fellow has been very patient, though; but he says, for his children’s sake, he must break up; they are going to ruin. He has engaged places for them all but little Sam; no one is willing to take him for the price M’Elroy can pay.”

“Not willing to take Sam, father!” interrupted Mary; “I should think they would be willingest of all to take Sam.”

“Why, Mary?”

“Because he wants taking care of most.”

“Ah, Mary, that’s a rule few go by. It’s no joke,” continued Aikin to his wife, “for the poor fellow to board out himself and four children, for there’s not one of them yet old enough to earn his own living.”

“Sam’s a bright boy,” said Uncle Phil.

“And a poor, sickly little fellow, that’s been cruelly neglected,” said Aunt Lottie.

“It would be a comfort to see if care and management would not cure him,” said Susan Aikin.

“M’Elroy can pay half a dollar a week, which I think will pay for all the poor little fellow can consume in his present state,” said Aikin.

“It is an opportunity,” said Susan, seeming to think aloud.

“What did you say, Susan?” asked her husband.

“Nothing; I was only thinking it was an opportunity.” Her husband smiled. “Well,” she

added, "I *am* superstitious about that: the opportunities are given, and it is our business to improve them, and it always makes me feel bad when I have let one slip by: the same never offers twice"

"Speak out plain, wife: what do you mean?"

It was now Susan's turn to smile. "You know what I mean, Harry. It would not be right for us to run into any expense for a neighbour's child, but care and kindness we can give—they cost us nothing. Lottie is the best of doctors, and I think, among us, we could cure up little Sam; and that would be a comfort."

"But," asked her husband, "are you not afraid to bring a child that has been in the hands of that bad woman among our children?"

"No, our children all pull one way; and if they see any thing wrong we shall know, for they are true and open as the day. Poor little Sam has not been sent into the streets like the other children; and, if he has caught some of their bad habits, surely they may be cured in one so young. We have no money to give away, husband; but of such as we have we can give, and hope for the Lord's blessing upon the gift."

The whole family, old and young, were of Susan's mind. The little boy was brought into the shelter of their fold; and soon, under the kind and judicious management of Lottie and Susan, his unstrung, weak, dropsical figure, was braced to health and activity; his eye brightened, and his sallow cheek changed to the natural hue of childhood. Good principles and good habits were implanted, and good feeling cherished; and he who must have perished in a miserable childhood, or

have dragged on a mischievous, or, at best, a worthless existence, held up his head in after life among his fellows, a prosperous, useful, and respected citizen.

Truly did Susan Aikin say, "God gives the opportunity;" and well did she improve it!

CHAPTER X.

THE RICH POOR MAN'S CHARITIES.

YEARS to the thirteenth of their marriage glided on without any marked change in the condition of the Aikins. Industry, frugality, skill, and sound judgment, saved them from dependance and wants. But they had a large family to supply; two unproductive members, as we were about to designate Uncle Phil and Charlotte, but this would be injustice to them. Charlotte's thoughtfulness, and her doing the *light chores*, saved Susan many an hour, which she turned to account at her trade; and Uncle Phil's skill in baby-tending proved also a great economy of the mother's time. There are certain persons in this world that are most happily adapted to the miscellaneous office of baby-tending. They are your people that don't care about bringing *any thing to pass*—indisposed to great exertions certainly, but not positively lazy; easy-tempered and kind-hearted, such as prefer the one-horse chaise traveling to the locomotion of a railroad—such was our

good Uncle Phil. But with all Aikin's diligence, and all his wife's efficiency, their inevitable expenses exhausted their income, save that a small sum was husbanded each year as a provision in case of sudden calamity. We confess that our friends remained poor, in the common acceptance of the word; but whether those were really so who had few desires ungratified—who were enjoying the essential blessings of life—who were giving their children, in the *home school*, the very best education, and whose humble habitation was the abode of health and contentment, we leave for those to decide who have felt that these goods riches cannot buy.

William, the eldest boy, was one morning standing by his father's cart in Pearl-street, when his attention was attracted by a poor man, who, in coming out of the door of a warehouse, staggered, and, catching by the iron railing, sunk down on the step. Half a dozen boys gathered about him, one crying, "He's top-heavy!" Another, "'Try it again, old fellow!"—"Drunken rascal!" muttered a gentleman, passing along.

"I am not drunk," faintly replied the old man.

"What is the matter, sir?" asked William, drawing near, as the other boys, perceiving their mistake slunk away.

"I am starved, child!"

William looked round for his father—he was in the warehouse—and the boy ran into an oyster-cellar, and expending his only shilling, returned with a bit of bread and a saucer of hot oysters, which the poor man devoured as if he were indeed starving. Then lifting his grateful eye to William,

and meeting his earnest and pitiful glance, he burst into tears. At this moment Aikin appeared, and William whispered to him what had occurred. Aikin recognised the man as a person he had frequently met during the preceding week inquiring for work ; he put a few questions in a friendly tone, that inspired the stranger with confidence ; and, in return, he told him that he had been a poor English curate—that many years ago his youngest daughter had married imprudently and come to America—that the last he had heard of her was four years before, when he received a hasty, illegible scrawl, in which she informed him that she was a widow, and had embarked on board the ship from which she then wrote to return to him—that her child exhibiting symptoms of varioloid, she was ordered off the ship, and knew not what was to become of her. The father, after waiting till, as he said, he could live and wait no longer, had converted his little property into money, and come with an elder daughter in search of the lost one. He had arrived here at the beginning of the inclement season—he had obtained no intelligence of his child—his eldest daughter, whose efficiency and fortitude he mainly relied on, took a cold, with which she languished through the winter, and had died two weeks before. His health was broken, his heart gone, and his little stock of money expended to the last farthing. Hunger had driven him forth to seek employment to support a life that had become a burden to him, but employment he could not find ; and, “ when I sunk down here,” he concluded, “ I was glad the time of release had come ;

but when that little fellow spoke kindly to me, I felt as if Providence had not forsaken me."

Aikin listened to the story, and was silent. "What do you mean to do about him?" whispered William, rightly interpreting his father's perplexity.

"I hardly know, Willie."—"Oh," thought he, "if Mr. Beckwith were only in town—he has money, and time, and a heart for every one's need!"

After a moment's consideration, he determined to go into the warehouse, not so much to apply to its proprietor, Morris Finley, for aid, as to consult with some gentlemen as to what aid had best be extended to the stranger. One suggested the hospital. There was no reason for taking him there, as he had no disease. The almshouse was proposed by another. Aikin replied, that a trifling present succour might save him from the degradation of public charity, and in a short time he might earn his own support. Finley, after rummaging his pockets, said he had no change; and then added, probably in reply to the contemptuous expression of Aikin's face, that there was no knowing but the man was an impostor, and, besides, he made it a rule never to give to strangers.

"It is a good time to make acquaintance with a stranger," said Aikin, "when he is dying of starvation." Finley turned on his heel, and busied himself in giving directions to his clerks, who but half concealed the smile of satisfaction which hovered on their lips at the "good rub," as they called it, their master had got from Aikin. A gentleman standing by gave Aikin five dollars, saying, "You

have good judgment—employ this as you think best for the poor man: I have money, but no time, to give.”

And what time has a New-York merchant, who is making his thousands and tens of thousands, engrossed as he is with projects and calculations, and beset by the hopes and fears that accompany the accumulation of riches, and their possible loss—what time has he for the claims of human brotherhood?—what time to obey the injunction, “Bear ye one another’s burdens?”—what time to imitate his Divine Master in going about doing good?—what time to seek the lost, raise the fallen, strengthen the weak, among his brethren—the children of one Father—traveliers to one home? He may find time for a passing alms, but for protection, for advice, for patient sympathy, for those effective charities that his knowledge, station, and influence put within his power, *he has no time*. For what consideration does he cede this irredeemable treasure, time? And when conscience shall ask, “When thou wert conceiving schemes of unlimited wealth, examining invoices, and counting gains, *where was thy brother?*” will he not wish to have been the *rich poor* man who, in the name of Jesus, stretched forth his hand to that neglected brother?

When Aikin returned to the steps, he communicated the merchant’s bounty to the stranger, and added, “If you will get on to my cart, and go to my house, my wife and I will try to make you comfortable for the present, and look out for employment for you against you get your strength.”

The stranger could not speak. His face, as he

feebly moved towards the cart, expressed more than words could.

"Where *can* he sleep, father?" whispered William, anticipating some little home perplexities.

"I don't know, my son; but mother will contrive."

"Oh, so she will—mother always does contrive every thing for everybody."

Most, *most* happy are those children who have William's confidence in the willing, active benevolence of their parents. The Aikins had hit on the right and only sure mode of teaching goodness.

"Who upon 'arth has Harry Aikin brought home with him?" exclaimed Uncle Phil, who, as Aikin's cart halted before the door, sat at the window, as usual, trotting the baby on his knee. Susan Aikin was busy at her needle, and did not look up till Anne exclaimed—

"It's some poor gentleman, mother!"

She then rose, and seeing her husband aiding the stranger, and William standing with the door wide open, his kind heart shining through his bright face, she opened the inner door, drew Charlotte's rocking-chair to the fire, threw a dry stick into the stove, and received the stranger with that expression of cheerful, sincere hospitality, which what is called high breeding only imitates.

"Sarvent, sir," said Uncle Phil, who would have been nowise disconcerted if Aikin had brought home a regiment. "Make your manners, Phil."

Little Phil crowed out his welcome, while Aunt Lottie warmed a cup of her particularly nice gruel, a cordial she saw the poor man wanted.

Aikin took his wife aside to explain the stran-

ger's condition and wants ; this done, " I knew Susan," he said, " it would be a comfort to you to do what you could for the poor man."

" Indeed is it, Harry, and no great trouble either ; for you know we have plenty of beds and bedding, and, now poor old Mr. Smith is gone, they can spare us our cot, and I can make him up a nice comfortable bed in father's room ; nothing ever puts father out."

" Nor father's daughter, I think ; and that is why I am sometimes afraid I shall impose on you."

" Impose on me, Harry ! in giving me an opportunity to do a kindness ! That is our chief comfort."

There are certain persons who do services for their fellow-creatures as some children learn lessons—as a task prescribed by authority. This was not Susan's way. She never separated the idea of duty from the deep abiding happiness that resulted from its performance.

CHAPTER XI.

AN ORPHAN GIRL.

MR. BARLOW (Barlow was the stranger's name) soon revived under the influence of the Aikins hospitalities. As he himself expressed it, kindness was the medicine he wanted; and every day he felt its healing power.

"I am not two shillings out of pocket in a week for the poor man," said Aikin; "and I think, Susan, we take as much pleasure in seeing him refreshed at our table, as the rich do in their dinner-parties. To tell the truth, Susan, though I suppose no one but you would believe it, I never did wish to change conditions with them."

"Nor I, I am sure; they must have a great deal of trouble. I often pity them. Not but that I am willing to take trouble, but then it must be for something to be got out of it."

This remark of Susan's led her husband to suggest a project which, after various emendations from her, was soon after carried into effect. They, like all good parents, rich or poor, were steadfastly intent on the advancement of their children. It has been already seen how much our friends were benefited by their early education—the common and paramount blessing of New-England. They felt their children to be the gift of God, and, being religious and reasoning beings, they fully realized

their responsibility to Him for the use and improvement of this best of his gifts. They were sufficiently acquainted with the condition, laws, institutions, and capabilities of their country, to know how to train their children to profit by them, and, when they became men and women, to reflect honour on them. They sent them to school; but they well knew that schools could do but a small part towards their education. Home was the school in which they were to be taught, from the first year of their existence, by day and by night, in sickness and in health, and their parents were to *set them the copies* which they were to follow. Besides instruction in virtues and manners, which, if not learned at home, are learned nowhere, they improved every opportunity of adding to their knowledge. Henry Aikin often devoted a leisure moment to looking over a book-stall, where valuable second-hand books are frequently to be obtained at low prices. He had lately purchased a work on natural history, with good plates, and he now proposed that Mr. Barlow, who was well acquainted with the subject, should give the children some instruction upon it; which, with the aid of the books, might be made very attractive to them. Susan suggested, that it was a pity such an *opportunity* should be confined to their children, and mentioned two or three worthy families whose children might be included. This led to an extension of the plan; and it was finally concluded to propose a social meeting, to be held successively at the different families included. Mr. Barlow was to give a sort of lecture, and, after that was over, the evening was to be passed socially. "If we

only had that little back room," said Susan, "we should want for nothing." The little back room was an apartment in a back building, with an entrance from the landing of the first flight of stairs. It was neatly finished, had a communication of its own with the yard, and a closet, large enough for a bed, attached to it. The Aikins had long wished to add it to their narrow accommodations, and more than ever recently, for it had been rented to a woman who, from her extreme shyness, her being visited only occasionally by a person who *called* himself her husband, and her having a little girl dressed in tawdry and shabby finery, they deemed a very undesirable neighbour. Uncle Phil, who was the kindest-hearted gossip in the world, but still a gossip, retained his country propensity to know all about his neighbours' affairs. He was much puzzled by the tenant of the back parlour, and day after day repeated to Charlotte and Susan, "Who can that woman be? I can't get sight of her face under that dum deep bonnet and veil; but her walk looks natural, and always puts me in mind of some of our Essex folks."

"That's odd, Lottie," said Susan; "don't you remember my telling you one day, when she was calling her little girl, that her voice sounded natural?"

"Yes; but she can't be any one we ever knew."

"I am sure I hope not."

"I hope not, too," said Uncle Phil, "but I do feel for the little girl; she looks so wishful after our children, and she's pretty spoken."

"I feel for her, too," said Susan, "but I must know something more about her before I should

feel it to be right to let the children associate with her."

Uncle Phil was determined, as far as in him lay, to remove this objection, and to make the most of the first opportunity of finding out something about the little stranger; so, the first mild sunny day, he stationed himself at the street door, with the baby in his arms, sure that the little girl, who frequently passed in and out, would be attracted by the natural affinities of childhood. She soon appeared, with a pitcher in her hand, on her way to the pump. She would have been extremely pretty, but that she wanted the foundation of all childhood's beauty—health. Her eye was sunken; her cheeks pale, and lips blue; and she looked peaked and cold. Her dress was thin and shabby. She had a soiled silk frock; slippers down at the heel; a faded silk bonnet, with artificial flowers; a carnelian necklace and ear-rings, and a ragged French shawl. A sad contrast was she to Anne and Ruth Aikin, who, in their school-dress, with a pail between them, were preceding her at the pump. They were dressed in factory frocks, and aprons with pockets; gingham hoods; warm gray cloaks; calf-skin shoes, and nice woolen stockings, of Aunt Lottie's knitting. On they ran, chattering and giggling, while the little shivering stranger lagged alone behind them. "I know very well, Mary," said Anne, in reply to something from her sister, "mother don't like us to keep company with girls she don't know; but, then, I know mother would not object to our just speaking kindly to her: I'll tell mother about it. Little girl," raising her voice, "we've filled our

pail—hold up your pitcher, and I'll pump that full." The courtesies of childhood have more expression than form. The stranger held up the pitcher till the water ran over it, and followed the little girls back with a lighter step. As she reached the door-step, an impatient voice called, "Juliet! Juliet!" She ran up the stairs, set her pitcher within the door, and eagerly returned, apparently in the hope of again seeing the little Aikins; but they had gone in, and no one was at the door but Uncle Phil and the baby. "So, your name is Juliet, is it?" he asked, eagerly seizing on a starting-point to begin his acquaintance.

"Yes, sir," replied Juliet, gently taking the hand the baby had stretched to snatch her ear-ring.

"Juliet what?" pursued Uncle Phil.

"Juliet Smith, sir."

"Smith?" ejaculated Uncle Phil, disappointed at hearing a name that afforded no clew.

"Yes, Smith—at least mother's name is Smith."

"Then yours is, sartin."

"No, it is not, sir—she is not my *real* mother."

"Is not? do tell! what is your real mother's name?"

"My own mother is dead, sir."

"Well, what was her name, child?"

"I don't know, sir; take care, baby, don't pull my ear so."

"Be done, Phil—poor little captain, he never sees such notions—our gals don't wear them. But did you never ask your own mother's name?"

"Yes, sir; and she says she'll tell me all about her one of these days."

"Are you sure she is dead?"

“Sure, sir!—I saw her buried up in the ground.’
The tears poured down the child’s cheeks.

“I declare,” said Uncle Phil, brushing his hand across his own eyes, and then drawing Juliet close to him—“is that person you call mother kind to you?” he asked.

“Sir!—almost always she is—sometimes she is dreadful sleepy—and sometimes she—she don’t feel well—and then she gets angry very easy.”

“Was your own mother kind to you?”

“My own mother!—indeed, indeed she was—always.”

“Poor little child! I feel for you. How long since she died?”

“I don’t know; I know it was winter-time, and we had not any wood, when Mrs. Smith came into our room—but it was not last winter—and I don’t know when it was.”

“Was this woman up stairs any kin to you?”

“No, she did not even know mother before that time—she was angry about something when she came in; but, when she saw how sick mother was, and that I was lying close to her to warm her, for I told you we had not any wood, sir, she seemed very sorry for mother, and she cried—and mother sent me out of the room—and she took care of mother almost all the time till she died—it was not long, though—for I remember there was a bit of the loaf of bread she brought lying by mother when she died. Now I am afraid she is getting sick just as mother was, for she coughs all night.”

Before Uncle Phil had time for any more interrogatories, Juliet was again called, and he went

into his daughter's room to enjoy the next best pleasure to hearing news, viz.—telling it.

“So, you see,” he said, concluding his story, “it was not strange I felt a kind of yearning towards that poor child, and since she's turned to be an orphan-like, neglected little body, I hope, gals (to Charlotte and Mrs. Aikin), you'll take her by the hand.”

Never were persons more ready to listen to such counsel. Mrs. Aikin had forbidden all intercourse with the forlorn little stranger, but the case now assumed a new aspect; and, when Aikin came home to dinner, their duty to the child was discussed in a committee of the whole family; Uncle Phil, as was his wont, spoke first. His thoughts were all on the surface, and, as soft substances easily melt, they naturally ran into words.

“It's my firm opinion,” he said, “that this *Miss Smith* is not a great deal better than she should be—I always suspect your people that ain't sociable and open-hearted; and what kind of a husband is that she's got, that comes slinking in, his face buried in the cape of his cloak? They'll just bring up that child—and she's a capital child, I tell you—to destruction. I feel as if you ought to do something about it.”

“What can we do, Susan?” said Aikin, appealing to his wife.

“I don't know; but, as father says, I feel as if it would be a comfort to do something.”

“I have two pairs of nice warm stockings that would about fit her,” said Aunt Lottie, “and our children are supplied for the winter.”

“Oh, mother!” said Anne, “mayn't she have

one of my warm frocks?—I can do with one, and she looks so shivery!”

“And, father,” said William, “if you will only give her the rest, I will give her my four shillings towards a pair of good shoes. I saw her coming in the other day, with her feet so wet and cold that she could not help crying.”

“Mother,” said little Ruth, “can’t you and Aunt Lottie contrive her such a petticoat as you made for me, of old pieces, with cotton quilted between them? you may take my patchwork for the lining.”

“My friends,” said Mr. Barlow, who sat listening with extreme interest to these promptings of the heart, “may I put in my mite? Cannot the little girl come into our evening class? She may gain something from my instructions, and she cannot fail to profit by intercourse with your children.”

The Aikins most cheerfully acquiesced in this suggestion. “The warm garments,” Susan said, “would only be a present comfort, but a good done to her mind would be lasting; and she feared no evil to arise to her children while their intercourse with the little stranger was under her own eye.”

Blessed are those families who call within their fold some of the wandering lambs of the flock! One more point was to be gained. The insuperable obstacle to conferring a benefit often arises from the party to be benefited. Mrs. Aikin was desirous to see Juliet’s present protector. Some curiosity, we do not deny, she felt to see, face to face, the person whose gait and voice had struck her father and herself as familiar; but she was mainly anxious to ascertain the child’s condition

and prospects. She therefore intercepted Juliet in the entry, and asked her to tell her mother she wished to speak with her. Juliet returned immediately, saying, "Her mother was too busy."

"Come down, then, Juliet, and let me know as soon as she is at leisure." Juliet smiled, bowed her head assentingly, and was seen no more that day. The next, a similar effort was baffled by a like evasion. On the third, Mrs. Aikin went herself to the door, knocked, and, after some bustle, Juliet opened a crack, just enough to show her face, which was died with blushes, as she said, "Mother says she don't wish at any time to see strangers."

"Then let the door remain ajar, Juliet, while I speak to her." She concisely communicated her plan, and requested that Juliet might regularly attend with the class. When she had finished, "Oh, please—please, ma'am," said Juliet, "wait one minute!"

Again the door was shut, and there were earnest whisperings within; the latch was then lifted, and Juliet most joyfully cried—"I may come, I may come!"

There is one thing more delightful than to make a child happy—the expectation that the happiness will lead to permanent good

CHAPTER XII.

“ SOCIETY ” AT THE POOR MAN'S HOUSE.

“ Be ye given to hospitality.”

ALL the preliminaries were arranged, and the time arrived for the first *sociable*, as the parties had agreed to call their meeting. They all belonged, according to the common classification, to the *lower orders*—shame to us that we do not abjure terms inappropriate to our country. Our humble friends, having no *help*, were obliged to make considerable efforts to effect their meetings; but when persons set about in earnest to obtain a moderate good, they will find, or make a way, to compass the means. Aunt Lottie was always at home to see to the youngest children—there was a care-taking old grandmother in one family—another had a kind “Cousin Sally” ready to lend a hand—and one good mother “would manage any way rather than lose such a privilege for her children.” So, at six o'clock, the prescribed time, the members of the sociable, numbering thirty, parents and children included, assembled at the Aikins'. Their room had the air of comfort that tidiness and judicious arrangement can give to the commonest apartment. The bed (it must be remembered the Aikins were yet obliged to make one room serve for kitchen, bedroom, and parlour), the bed was made up as nicely as a shaking Quaker's, and cov-

ered by a patchwork quilt—the work and pride of the little Aikins, and the admiration of the matrons. A substantial rag carpet was spread over the middle of the floor. The stove, a mournful substitute for the cheerful, open fireplace of the olden time, was black and shining as stove could be. Uncle Phil’s cushioned chair, and Aunt Lottie’s stuffed one, stood on either side of the stove. The window-ledges were filled with the prettiest screens—plants, Aunt Lottie’s charge—the stoutest in pots, and the nurslings in well-patched teapots and mugs. A Connecticut clock (bless the economical artists that have placed within the reach of every poor man this domestic friend and faithful monitor) stood on the mantel-piece. A curtain was drawn aside from two book-shelves, filled with excellent books; the most conspicuous were a Bible, a Hymn-book, the Pilgrim’s Progress, a Compend of Universal History, History of America, the American Revolution, a Life of Washington, and a Constitution of the United States, bound up with Washington’s Farewell Address. Underneath these shelves was a pine table, with a pile of books, slates, and writing-books, two clearly-burning lamps on it, and a chair for Mr. Barlow and benches for the children beside it. A smaller table was placed in the middle of the room; and on it, bright as burnished gold, two brass candlesticks, which Susan had inherited from her grandmother, and which proudly bore two good mould candles of her thrifty grandchild’s running. On another table, under the glass, was a waiter, with a nice napkin, which covered a simple treat of biscuits and butter, cakes, nuts, and apples; and on the stove a pot of cocoa.

“We none of us,” Harry Aikin had said, when arranging the sociables with his friends, “spend a penny at the dram-shop, so we may well afford a little family cheer at home, where wives and children can partake with us; and thus the good things God gives us may be used to nourish our affections.” May not this be esteemed a mode of obedience to the Christian law—eating and drinking to the glory of God?

Our details may be tiresome; but do they not show that, in this country, real comforts, and even the best pleasures of life—hospitality, liberality, and charity—can be attained by the poor, *if intelligent and managing?* that they are not compelled, even the less-favoured portions of them, to exhaust life in painful efforts to keep soul and body together? but that, by exertion and contrivance, they may cultivate their own and their children’s minds and hearts, and advance them in that upward course open to all. Let others glory in the countries of luxuries and the arts; let us thank God that ours is filled with blessings for the poor man.

Mr. Barlow selected the horse and the cow, as the most useful animals to man, for the subjects of his first lecture. He was a sincerely and earnestly religious man; and he believed ignorance to be the most fruitful source of irreligion, and that, the more the mind was awakened to the wonders of creation, the more it understood of the wisdom and benevolence of the contrivances of the Creator, the more certainly would it reject the bad seed of infidelity that is sowed at broadcast with such cruel industry.

The children, at first, thought they knew every thing to be known about horses and cows; some of their parents thought so too, and looked up to the clock, secretly hoping the lecture would not last long; but while Mr. Barlow described, in the simplest possible terms, the structure of these animals—the provisions for their own enjoyment, and their adaptation to the wants of man,—while he told particulars of their history and habits in different countries, and related some authentic anecdotes of them—the clock struck seven, and the pointer was approaching to eight when he finished. He was saluted with the most unequivocal of all compliments to speakers, of, “Oh, how short!” and, “Please, Mr. Barlow, go on.” He thanked the audience for their attention; said he would put off *going on* till the next meeting, when he expected the children would show him their books, with the best drawings they could make of a horse and a cow, and as much of his lecture as they could remember, neatly written down. The children then formed into little knots, some playing at jack-straws and some at checkers. The *treat* was served, and Sam M’Elroy (now a sturdy boy, apprenticed to a farmer on Long Island) proposed to his companions that they should pick out nuts for the girls. While this boyish gallantry was being executed, “Do you really believe, William Aikin,” said John Miner, “all Mr. Barlow said about horses? I know very well they are so made as to be strong, and fleet, and spry; but do you really believe a horse has thoughts and feelings? I think it’s just of a piece with a fairy story.”

“That’s because, John, you are not acquainted .

with horses. I am sure father's horse knows more than some men, and feels more, too. When I go into the stable, he turns his head and gives me a look that all but says, 'How d'ye do, Will?' and he will lay his head against me just as our baby does; that must be feeling, John: he don't do so to a stranger. He knows, as well as I do, the places he is in the habit of stopping at; and if you could see how impatient he is to get home to his stable at night, you would own he had hope or expectation, and there must be thought for that—thought of the rest and food that's coming. I don't know the truth of what Mr. Barlow says about the superior intelligence of horses in Asia, where they are treated like companions and friends; but I believe it, for, as far as I have seen, whatever thinks and feels is the better for being well treated."

"That's true, I believe, William," said Sam M'Elroy; "Mr. Birt has a little heifer among his cows that is the crossest, snarlingest thing you ever saw: not one of the boys or men either can milk her, but she'll stand as patient as a lamb to Nannie Smith. I told you about Nannie: she is the girl that is so kind to everybody; and she always speaks softly to the heifer, and pats her, and strokes her, and the men kick her and beat her."

"Well, then, Sam," resumed John Miner, "I suppose you think cows have feelings?"

"Cows have feelings!—to be sure I do. You should see a cow meet her calf after they have been apart a day; and you should hear her moanings when the calf is taken away from her. Ah," added the poor boy, sighing, as some painful recollections pressed on him, "cows have a great deal more feeling than some mothers."

“ Well,” said John Miner, after a little reflection, “ I don't know but Mr. Barlow and you are right, boys. Any how, I hope I never shall abuse an animal as I have seen some people. I think—don't you, William?—people would be a great deal better if they knew about things.”

“ Yes, I do, John ; and I was thinking almost the very same thing when Mr. Barlow was explaining to us some parts of the anatomy of the horse and cow. I thought, when God had seemed to take such pains to contrive them, so that they might enjoy their lives, it was a horrid shame for men to beat, and kick, and maim God's wonderful work.”

“ And did not you think,” asked Sam, “ that part of it was good where he spoke of men beating horses and swearing at the same time—calling on God, as it were, to witness their abuse of his creatures ? I guess, if they only stopped to think a minute, they would not do so.”

“ There is great use,” replied William, “ as Aunt Lottie always says, in thinking beforehand, and beginning right. Now, would it not be a good plan for us to draw up a paper, and sign it, resolving always to be kind and thoughtful for animals ?” The boys readily agreed to the proposition. They retired to the writing-table. William wrote the resolution. They all signed it, and left it in his safe keeping ; and many a dumb creature has since profited by it.

Little Ruth Aikin had drawn her stool close to Mr. Barlow, and was picking out nuts for him, while Juliet was paring his apple.

“ That was a funny story you told, sir,” said

Ruth, "about a cow being mother to a baby, out in the new country; did she really lie down for the poor little thing to suckle her, and low when she was creeping towards her?"

"Why, yes, Anne," answered Juliet, anticipating Mr. Barlow's reply; "and don't you remember how she licked over the baby's head and face, just as she would have done her calf's? I think such a mother is the best if you lose your real one."

"Why, Juliet, how funny!"

"You would not think I felt funny," whispered Juliet to Ruth, with the confidence natural to childhood, "if you knew I had not eaten any thing today but a bunch of raisins, and they tasted horribly."

"Raisins taste horribly—that can't be," replied Ruth, who had not tasted them above twice in her life.

"They did—and so does cake very often to me, when we have not any thing else. Mother, as I call her, sometimes sleeps all day, and she forgets we have not any thing to eat."

"Do eat some biscuits, Juliet."

"I can't—I am not hungry; I hardly ever am hungry now-a-days."

"How strange, when you have raisins and cake, and I don't get any thing but a bit of dry bread for supper; but I'm so hungry it always tastes good."

Poor Juliet, while little Ruth was plump and rosy on her dry bread, was suffering the cruel effects of irregular and improper food.

Not one of the company enjoyed the sociable more than Uncle Phil; to be sure, he took a long sound nap during Mr. Barlow's lecture; but, when

that was over, he endorsed every word of it, averring that horses and cows were knowing *critters*—and remarking with delightful complacency—“ It’s a great privilege for the young folks to meet together with them that’s seen life, and knows as much as we do.”

“ Why, yes,” said Caleb Miner, whose rugged features expressed a general discontent, “ it’s a kind of a privilege, to be sure, and thanks to you, Aikin, for thinking of it ; a poor man, and a poor man’s children, have but few privileges in this life ; work, work, and no play ; while the rich have nothing to do but enjoy themselves.”

“ Enjoy themselves if they can, and work too,” replied Henry Aikin, with a smile. “ I often drive home at nightfall with a light heart, for my work is done, my wages earned and paid ; and I leave the merchants who employ me standing over their desks, their brows drawn up to a knot with care and anxiety ; and there they stay till seven, eight, or nine o’clock, looking over puzzling accounts, calculating gains or losses, as the case may be. If there are such rich men as you speak of, Miner, they are beyond my knowledge. I don’t know that you join in it ; but, I must say, I think there is a useless and senseless outcry against rich men. It comes from the unobserving, ignorant, and unreflecting. We must remember that, in our country, there are no fixed classes ; the poor family of this generation is the rich family of the next ; and, more than that, the poor of to-day are the rich of to-morrow, and the rich of to-day the poor of to-morrow. The prizes are open to all, and they fall without favour. Our rich people, too, are, many of them, among the

very best persons in society. I know some such—there is Mr. Beckwith, he has ten talents, and a faithful steward is he; he and his whole family are an honour and blessing to their country—doing in every way all the good they can. Such a rich man as Morris Finley I despise, or rather pity, as much as you or any man can; but, pray, do not let us envy him his riches—they are something quite independent of himself; and, can a man be really poorer than he is—a poor mind, a poor heart—that is the poverty to shun. As to rich men being at their ease, Miner, every new acquisition brings a new want—a new responsibility.”

“But, Aikin, Aikin—now, candidly, would you not be willing to take their wants and responsibilities with their purses?”

“I cannot say, Miner; money is the representative of power—the means of extended usefulness; and we all have dreams of the wonderful good we should do if we had these means in our hands. But this I do know, that, till we are conscious of employing, and *employing well*, the means we have, we ought not to crave more. But let us look at the matter in the right point of view. We are all children of one family—all are to live here a few years—some in one station, and some in another. We are all of us, from the highest to the lowest, labourers in our Father’s field; and *as we sow, so shall we reap*. If we labour rightly, those words of truth and *immense* import will sound in our ears like a promise, and not like a threat. We shall work at our posts like faithful children, not like tasked slaves; and shall be sure of the riches that perish not in the using. As to all other riches, it

is not worth our while to covet or envy them ; except in some rare cases, we have all, in this country, gifts and means enough. As to property, I am the poorest man of you all.”

“ Yes, yes, Aikin ; but you ’ ve every thing else — what is the little advantage we have in property, compared to your education, and so forth ? ”

This argument Aikin could not sincerely gainsay ; but, anxious to impart some of his sentiments to his friends, he proceeded—

“ Among us working-men, property is a sign of industry, ingenuity, temperance, and frugality ; therefore, I am anxious to make what excuse I can for being so much poorer than the rest of you. You know I began with a broken-down constitution, and have never been able to perform half the labour of a sound man ; but I have taken care of what strength I had—I selected a healthy business—I have been strictly temperate, not only in drinking, but in eating—and this, with always a clean, cheerful home to come to, has made me a stouter man at forty than I was at three-and-twenty. In the meantime, I have seen many a lawyer growing rich, and, just when he has laid up much goods, falling a prey to disease contracted sitting at an office table, performing labour that some of us might fancy no labour at all ; but which is proved, by its effects, to be much harder than our work. Merchants, too, whom I remember, bright and blooming, have gone on laying up their thousands and tens of thousands—going from fagging in their counting-houses to feasting like kings ; and, at forty-five or fifty, look at them—they have houses, and lands, and coaches, to be sure, but do they enjoy them ?

There is John Marlow, of the house of Marlow Minter, & Co.—why, he would give half his fortune to be able to eat those nuts you are eating, Miner, and go to bed and sleep as you will after them. Look at Morris Finley—his face looks to me like an account-book, written over with dollars and cents, as if he had coined his soul into them. And there is Robson, of the house of Robson & Co.—I remember his hair as black, glossy, and thick as your John's, and his colour as pure red and white; now, he has a scratch on the top of his head—his eyes buried in unwholesome fat—his skin mottled, and he lives between his counting-house and Broadway, in continual dread of an apoplexy. How many Pearl-street merchants over five-and-thirty are dyspeptics?"

"But, mercy on us, Aikin! you don't suppose money is infected with dyspepsy?"

"No; but I do suppose that those who make it an end, and not a means, pay the penalty of their folly. I do suppose that the labour and anxiety of mind attending the accumulation and care of it, and the animal indulgences it procures, are a very common means of destroying the health. Now, Miner, have we not a greater chance for health, which we all allow to be the first of earthly blessings, than the rich? Then, we have some advantages for the education of our children which they cannot get. You may say, necessity is a rough schoolmaster, but his lessons are best taught. The rich cannot buy books, or hire masters, that will teach their children as thoroughly as ours are taught by circumstances, industry, ingenuity, frugality, and self-denial. Besides, are not our little

flocks mutual assistance and mutual kindness societies ? ”

“ They are, that ’ s true—they are ; and though I must own mine ain ’ t brought up like yours, and they do have their little spreeds and flashes, yet they are open-handed to one another, and take part with one another in their pleasures, and troubles, and battles, and so on. But go on, Aikin ; I feel as if I were growing richer every sentence you utter. ”

Before Aikin could proceed, a hand-bell rung loudly and impatiently, the well-known signal for poor little Juliet. The children gathered around her to express their unwillingness to part with her, and William Aikin, in his eagerness, stumbled over Miner ’ s foot, which was in rather an obtrusive position. “ Oh, Mr. Miner, I beg your pardon, ” said the little fellow.

“ There, now, ” said Miner, “ that puts me in mind of what I am often grumbling at ; your children are an exception ; but how, in the name of nature, are our children to learn manners in our rough and tumble way of living ? Can you figure that out ? ”

“ Why, Miner, manners, for the most part, are only the signs of qualities. If a child has a kind and gentle disposition, he will have the outward sign ; if he have the principle that teaches him to maintain his own rights, and not encroach on those of others, he will have dignity and deference, which I take to be qualities of the best manners. As to forms of expression, such as my boy used when he stumbled over your foot, they are easily taught : this I call women ’ s work. They are naturally more mannerly than we.

'There are, to be sure, certain forms that are in use by what are called the 'polite world' that we can know nothing of; but they are not essential to the spirit of good manners. Ours, I believe, is the only country where those who compose the lower classes have the power and the means of good manners; for here there is no sense of degradation from the necessity of labour. Here, if we will, the poorest of us can get education enough for our children to make them feel the dignity of their nature and destiny, and to make them realize the real equality of rights on which the institutions of the country are based. *Self-respect is the real basis of good manners.* It makes my blood boil to see the manners of the low-born who come here from the old countries—their servility, their meanness, their crouching to their superiors when they expect a favour, and their impertinence, and disobligingness, and downright insolence, when the power is in their own hands. They are like horses used to being guided and driven, and know no more than they would how, without harness, reins, and blinders, to do their duty.'*

* While writing this page, a circumstance has come to my knowledge that illustrates my theory of the effect of condition upon manners. Our streets, since the last snow-storm, even the side-walks, are almost impassable with masses of snow and ice. M., a distinguished exile, and his wife, who earn an honourable living by imparting the accomplishments of their more fortunate days, were returning from their lessons. The hackney-coach had disappointed them. M., deprived of one leg, found it impossible to use his crutches on the ice. They stopped at the corner of a street. The packed omnibuses passed them. Private sleighs, from which, as they drew up to turn the corner, they heard expressions of compassion, also, like the Levite, passed on. Two *labouring men* offered their aid: one carried M's crutches, the other all but carried him to his own door

“ You say, Harry,” interposed Mrs. Aikin, “ that it is women’s work to teach manners to the children; but, don’t you think they learn them mostly from example ? ”

“ Certainly I do ; manners, as well as every thing else. Man is called an imitative animal. You can tell by the actions of a child a year old what sort of people it has lived with. If parents are civil and kind to one another,—if children never hear from them profane or coarse language, they will as naturally grow up well-behaved as that candle took the form of the mould it was run in.”

“ But,” said Miner, who was willing to shift off the consequences of some of his short-comings upon inevitable chances, “ suppose you do set a bright example at home, you can’t shut your children up there—they’ve got to go out, and go to school, and hear and see every thing under the sun.”

“ Yes, Mr. Miner,” replied Susan Aikin, “ but it’s surprising, if they are taken care of at home, how little any thing out of doors seems to harm them.”

“ I tell you what, Miner,” said Uncle Phil, glad of an opportunity to cut in, “ what our folks call *taking care* is a pretty considerable *chore*,—it’s doing a little here, and doing a little there, and always doing.”

“ Wife ! ” called out Miner to his helpmate, who had just given her child a cuff for treading on her toe,—“ wife, I depend on your remembering all

when they both respectfully took their leave, declining the compensation (a most liberal one) which M. offered, accustomed to countries where the services of the poor have always their money value

this: you know I've a dreadful poor memory; and I want you to tell it over to the children."

Poor Miner, in spite of all Henry Aikin's hints, continued in the common error of expecting to effect that by precept which is the work of example, patiently repeated, day after day, and year after year.

The conversation then took a more miscellaneous turn. The women talked over their domestic affairs, and the men ran upon politics, showing themselves sufficiently enlightened, and as disinterested as we wish all politicians were. At half past nine they separated, cheerful, and, we trust, profited; and, as they heard the carriages rumbling along the streets that were then conveying the earliest of our fashionables to their crowded parties, we think our humble friends had no reason to contrast their social pleasures unfavourably with those of the rich, but that they might feel that their meeting together, as Uncle Phil said, "in this neighbourly way, was a privilege."

CHAPTER XIII

"SOCIETY" AT THE RICH MAN'S HOME.

"The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them.

WE change the scene to a fine new house, in a fashionable quarter of the city: Mrs Finley alights from her own carriage, and meets her daughter at the door, her face full of something she had to

communicate. “Oh, mamma,” she exclaimed, “who was that that came into Morrison’s thread and needle store just as you passed?—a lady with an ermine boa,—you bowed to her.”

“Mrs. Kingson. Why, Sabina Jane?”

“The lady that was with her asked her, when they got into the shop, who she bowed to? She said, ‘*That* Mrs. Finley that left her card at my house!’—‘Does she keep a carriage?’ asked the other lady; and then she took up her eye-glass and looked after you, and said, so everybody might have heard her in the shop, ‘Liveries! and a coat of arms!—no wonder we are a laughing-stock to foreigners.’”

“Well,” answered the perturbed and perplexed mother, “I do wonder what is the harm of liveries? It is next to impossible to find a servant that is willing to wear them; that’s a proof they are genteel; and then, as to the coat of arms, I am sure the man that made the harness said it was the latest pattern he had in his shop. ‘*That* coach,” she continued, “has been nothing but a plague to me. Your father is always fretting about the expense, and complaining that the coachman cheats him; and John will do nothing but drive the horses; and everybody that has a coachman in livery has a footman, and your father thinks the waiter can turn into a footman when I want one, but he don’t know how inconvenient that is. Nobody knows, but *them* that has them, the trials of keeping a carriage.”*

* One of these incidental trials was met by a ready ingenuity that deserves a more enduring preservation than we can give it. A gentleman told his coachman to bring him a pitcher of fresh water from the pump. “I can’t sir”—“Why not?”—

“Then, mamma, why do you keep one?”

“Don’t ask such silly questions, Sabina Jane.”

A servant entered. “Mrs. Finley, here are the notes that have come in since you went out.” Mrs. Finley took them eagerly. She had sent out invitations for a party, and she was anxious to know who had accepted and who refused. The first she opened was from the teacher of her only son Arthur William, informing her that Master Arthur was behind-hand in all his studies, and that, unless his lessons were superintended at home, he feared he must dismiss the boy, as the reputation of his school depended on the progress of his scholars.

“This is too bad,” said Mrs. Finley; “I wonder what we pay him for but to teach? Mr. Beltam always said Arthur was a prodigy when he went to his school.”

“But, mamma, you said Arthur could not read when he had been to Mr. Beltam’s two years.”

“What’s that to the purpose, miss? Mr. Beltam never sent in any complaints. I will not make myself a slave to looking after your lessons at home; I have not health for it: besides, your father and I never studied Latin, and French, and philosophy, and them things.”

“I wonder what you did study, mother?”

“For shame, Sabina Jane! I am sure your father understands every kind of arithmetic.”

“Does he, mother? I did not know he understood any thing.”

“’Tis not my business.”—“What the deuse is your business?”—“Taking care of the carriage, sir.”—“Bring up the carriage, then.” The carriage came: “John” (to the waiter), “get into the carriage, and bring me a pitcher of fresh water from the pump.”

It was difficult to decide whether this was said with simplicity or impertinence. Unfortunate, indeed, are those children who, with their acquisitions, acquire a contempt for their parents’ ignorance. The next note opened was a polite notice to Mrs. Finley, from Mademoiselle A——, that a box of newly-arrived Parisian millinery would be opened for her patrons’ inspection the next morning. “Very attentive in Mademoiselle!” said Mrs. Finley, when unfortunately the pleasure of being a patron was checked by one of the usual penalties for such distinctions. A bill had dropped from within the note, which the little girl handed to her mother, reading the amount, \$57 45. “How very provoking!” exclaimed Mrs. Finley; “she might better have sent it at any other time: your father frets so about the expenses for the party. I am sure they are necessary; but I can’t ask him for the money to pay Mademoiselle now, that’s certain; so, throw the bill in the fire, Sabina Jane; and, when Mademoiselle sends for the money, I can say I haven’t got the bill.”

“Yes, mamma, and you can say it must have dropped out; it did drop, you know.”

“That’s well thought of, Sabina Jane, and no lie either.” Thus did this poor child receive from her weak mother a lesson in fraud, lying, and hypocrisy. Mrs. Finley proceeded in the examination of her notes. “‘Mrs. Dilhurst accepts,’ &c. Oh, I knew she would accept; I wonder when she ever refused? ‘Mrs. Kingson regrets an engagement,’ &c.; What a shame it is for people to lie so! She cannot have an engagement a fortnight ahead!” We have not space to give the

various returns Mrs. Finley then read and received in the course of the day. She had made a great effort to assemble a party of fashionable people: she had, to use the current word, *cut* those of her acquaintance that might be suspected of vulgarity; and she had left her cards at the houses of those who had been all their lives, and their parents before them, in the best society. She was sure Mrs. Kingson, at whose request she had repeatedly subscribed to societies, would accept; and, if Mrs. Kingson accepted, the Misses —— would, and then the Baron de —— would, and then the success of her party was secured. Presuming upon all this, no expense had been spared: the Kendall band had been engaged; and the party was to be as brilliant as music, lights, china, glass, and the luxuries of the season could make it. Finley, whose vanity was his next strongest passion to his cupidity, had been lavish of his money. Every thing his wife asked for he had granted, with one single reservation: he had stood at bay at a *paté de foie gras*,* which his wife maintained to be essential. “What, thirty dollars,” he said, “for what was nothing, after all, but a pie of geese’s livers!—no, he could not go that!” and Mrs. Morris Finley, more prudent than some wives, never urged when morally certain of urging in vain.

* As we hope to have readers who never heard of a *paté de foie gras*, we inform them that it is an eatable not very rare at evening parties. It is a pie imported from France, and costing, if we are correctly informed, from twenty to fifty dollars. An unnatural enlargement of the liver of geese is produced by confining the bird, and subjecting it to artificial heat. We hardly know which most to admire,—the mercy of the ingenious gastronomist who devised this luxury, or the taste of its consumers

Poor Mrs. Finley, with every luxury that money could buy, felt deeply mortified at the absence of that which money could not buy. There is a certain aristocracy in our city that is most carefully guarded. It is said that the barriers here may be as easily passed as the fences that enclose our fields, so mildly contrasting with the thorny hedges of the aristocracy of the parent land. But it is not so. All that we would ask is, that the terms of admission might be settled on *the right ground*. However, we leave this to be arranged by the parties concerned, and proceed to the facts in the case of Mrs. Morris Finley. Her husband cared nothing about the matter; but that it should appear Morris Finley was among the first—*good society* (so called), he looked upon as a part of his money’s worth—a fair return for his expenditure, and therefore he had his full part in his wife’s mortification, when, after all her pushing, her arts and trucklings, her shirking this old acquaintance and cutting that relation, their empty places were not filled by bright names in the fashionable world.

Two or three stars wandered from their sphere into Mrs. Finley’s orbit; some from motives arising from a business-relation with Finley, and others from good-nature peculiar to the individuals. But these few lights only served to show the general darkness. Such vain ambition as the Finleys’ might be cured, if comments like the following were overheard.

“ Mrs. Kingson, do you mean to accept Mrs. Finley’s invitation ? ”

“ No, my dear.”

“ Why, aunt? they say it is to be something quite superb ”

“So much the worse. Did she not let her poor mother toil away her life in a second-rate boarding-house? and she will not employ her worthy cousins who sew for me, because they are her cousins. No, I’ll have nothing to do with such people as the Finleys.”

“Mamma, do you mean to go to the Finleys’?”

“No, indeed; it was too impertinent of the woman to ask me. I never saw her except at Saratoga.”

“Mrs. Smith, are you going to the Finleys’?”

“No; they are too ignorant and vulgar.”

“But you visit the Fitzroys?”

“My dear, you forget; Fitzroy is a junior partner of Mr. Smith.”

“Oh, is he?”

“Mrs. Brown, do you go to the Finleys’?”

“No, I will not, when I can help it, visit the *merely* rich.”

These reasons, and a hundred similar, were of course not alleged to Mrs. Finley, but veiled in the conventional “regrets,” “previous engagements,” &c. &c. So Mrs. Morris Finley gave her party to those for whom she did not think it worth the trouble; nor did her husband deem it worth the expense. The house was turned topsyturvy, the servants overworked, the children made ill by surfeiting, and no one happy or grateful; the invited regarded Mrs. Finley with contempt, and the *left out* with resentment.

Which, we would ask, was the *richest* man, estimated by the hospitality exercised and enjoyed, — Henry Aikin, or Morris Finley?

CHAPTER XIV.

AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE NOT "FORGOT."

FEW things are more gratifying to a benevolent person than to know that a charity has proved effective ; and to the Aikins, to whom charities were luxuries which their straitened circumstances forbade them often to indulge in, it was a happiness hardly to be estimated by those who have it in their power to give away every day. Little Juliet had appeared from the first a gentle-tempered, loving, and interesting child ; but nothing could be more desultory than her habits, nor more discouraging than her condition. She had, as she said, been taught to read by her *real* mother ; but, in her present protectress's various removings, her books had been lost, and her little learning forgotten, so that she could not form a letter, and she even read stumbingly.

She was, at first, a constant hinderance to the little Aikins, and a constant trial of their mother's inexhaustible patience. Her ear was caught by every passing sound in the street, and her eye by every occurrence in the apartment. But she was most grateful for the kindness extended to her, and most desirous to profit by it. Habits in children are, like young plants, of rapid growth, and in a few weeks Juliet's character underwent a transfor-

mation similar to that of her dress, where substantial, neat, warm, and lasting garments had been substituted for dirty finery.

Mrs. Aikin was not one of those selfish parents who make it a sort of duty to cast aside whatever can possibly interfere with the advancement of their own offspring. She was willing to take something from their abundant portion to give to this little orphan in the human family. She sometimes feared Juliet might exhaust Mr. Barlow's patience; but he seemed rather to pity her ignorance and carelessness than to be irritated by them. He was drawn to her by some resemblance in their fate. Both seemed dropped links from the chain of humanity; both to have been the objects of the intervention of Providence, and both to have been cast upon the same charity. In speaking of Juliet to Mrs. Aikin, Mr. Barlow adverted to the reasons for the interest he felt in the child; and "yet," he said, "this is not all; her look, when she suddenly turns her eye, or that imploring expression when she fears she has displeased me, put me so in mind of one that's gone: her voice, too, when she speaks low, Mistress Aikin, it makes my heart throb, and the perspiration stand in the hollow of my hand."

"You have not gained your strength yet," replied Mrs. Aikin, "and a little matter affects you."

"It is not a little matter, my good friend; I have thought there was a possibility—but that is foolish, and I will not talk about it. It will cost me much to part from her, as well as the rest of you; but now there is no reason I should encumber you any longer, for the old rule does not always hold good

—'where there's room in the heart there's room in the house.'"

We have omitted to mention, that Aikin had obtained the place of assistant teacher in a classical school for Mr. Barlow.

"I know, sir," replied Susan, "that you can now get much more comfort elsewhere than we can give you; but a grief and loss it will be to us to part with you. I have been looking forward to your taking the little back room, for Juliet told me to-day—and, poor child, she was crying when she said it—that her mother was about to move."

"Juliet going too?" exclaimed the children, "that is too bad."

A bustling step in the entry was heard, and immediately after an imperative voice at Mrs. Smith's door, calling out—"Open the door—I say I must speak with you." The door opened, and Juliet's voice was heard in reply, but so low that not a word could be distinguished. The response was sufficiently audible—"Don't cry, child—I'm not going to hurt you, but I must speak with your mother. 'The house is not mine,'" continued the stranger, now evidently addressing Mrs. Smith; "and I have no authority to grant indulgences. You are behind-hand for the last three weeks, and if you don't pay Saturday, you must clear out—good day, ma'am."

An opportunity was now offered, as the landlord's agent repassed the door, to speak for the room for Mr. Barlow; but he and all the rest were absorbed in their interest for little Juliet, whose soft footsteps were soon heard on the stairs. Anne sprang to the door, and opening it, asked Juliet to come in.

“She will not,” said Anne, as Juliet went out at the street door; “she blushed as red as fire, and seemed to have something under her cloak—what can it mean?”

Mrs. Aikin guessed what it meant; for, more than once, she had observed Juliet going out on secret expeditions; and once, when she had looked her full in the face, the poor child’s downcast eye and burning cheek betrayed her secret to Mrs. Aikin. Truth is stamped with innocence on the soul; there they blend, or are effaced together. Now, Mrs. Aikin thought, she must no longer scruple to interfere; and, when Juliet returned, she went into the entry, and closing the door after her, said—

“What have you there, Juliet?”

“She told me not to tell, ma’am.”

“You need not, my child, I know what it is.” The fumes of the gin had already betrayed the secret. “Does she take this stuff every day, Juliet?”

“No, Mrs. Aikin, not *now*, since she has such a fever and cough—she only takes it when she feels awfully. My *own* mother never took it, though she had dreadful feelings, too.”

While Juliet spoke, she seemed in a flutter of impatience and timidity—all eye and ear—as if expecting a summons; or, what was still worse, fearing a suspicion of betraying the miserable woman’s secret. In the meantime, Susan Aikin was considering what she had best do. That Mrs. Smith’s disease must be aggravated, and her death hastened, by the means she took for present relief, was certain; and Susan was not of a temper to fold her hands and say—“It is no business of mine”

—when she could help a fellow-creature, it was her business.

"Leave the mug here, Juliet," she said, "and tell your mother I wish to speak with her."

"Oh, I dare not, Mrs. Aikin—she'll be so angry with me; she does not mind speaking with other people, but she seems to hate to see any of your family. I'm sure I don't know what the reason is—there—I hear her—pray let me go!" and Juliet seized the mug, which Mrs. Aikin had set on the stair, and disappeared.

In a few moments Mrs. Aikin followed her and tapped at the door; Juliet opened it, and stood aghast, while Mrs. Aikin said—"Mrs. Smith, I know you are sick, and in trouble—let me come in, and see if something cannot be done for you."

The door, evidently at a sign from within, was closed in Mrs. Aikin's face; but, through the crevices, Mrs. Aikin heard a voice that seemed familiar to her, half scolding and half crying.

She again tapped at the door, and Juliet opened it a crack, and said, in a voice whose tremulous softness contrasted with the rudeness of her words—

"She says, ma'am, she won't be bothered."

"Well, Juliet, I'll go away now. She may feel differently by-and-by."

Mrs. Aikin's persevering kindness and forbearance touched the heart of the miserable woman; but the fumes of the liquor were mounting to her brain, and she drew the bed-clothes over her head and fell into a heavy sleep, from which she was awakened late in the evening by the stealthy entrance of a man, who brought her a note from her nominal husband. This threw her into violent

hysterics, during which the man disappeared ; and Juliet, who, wearied and hungry, had fallen asleep across the foot of the bed, awakened. She was terrified by Mrs. Smith's apparent unconsciousness and convulsive sobs, and she, obeying her first impulse, ran down to the Aikins. Harry and his wife, without any false scruples, went to Mrs. Smith's apartment, bidding Juliet to remain with Aunt Lottie. They found Mrs. Smith in hysterics, partly the effect of the gin, and partly of a sudden distress which had been communicated to her by the open letter she held in her clinched hand. A filthy lace cap stuck on the side of her head ; her hair hung over her face ; a tattered French cape and a soiled silk gown served to make more disgusting, but not to hide, the rags and dirt beneath them.

Our friends had scarcely seen the woman when they exchanged significant glances, for they both recognised in the wretched person before them, in spite of the dropsical cheeks, bloodshot eyes, and sharpened features, the playmate of their childhood—the beauty of their youthful days, Paulina Clark! Grieved and shocked were they : but they thought only of administering aid ; and this being most judiciously done, Paulina soon after opened her eyes, and, recognising her old acquaintances, a new burst of emotion and a violent shrieking ensued.

No disease is so completely under the control of moral treatment as hysterics.* Harry Aikin's

* Much is said about the march of mind, and one of the lesser proofs of it may be admitted in the diminution of this disease of hysteria, the prevalence and *awful supremacy* of which will be remembered by all who can look back for twenty or thirty years.

energetic voice, and his wife's gentle, calm manner, soon subdued the spasm and restored their patient to a degree of rationality.

"Oh! I know you, Susan; and you, too, Harry Aikin!" she said.

"And we know you, Paulina," replied Susan; "and would be glad to do any thing we can for you."

The kindness of Susan's tone brought a flood of tears from Paulina. This seemed to relieve her, and she said, in her natural voice—

"But you don't know, you don't know—" her utterance was choked.

"We don't *know*," said Susan, "but we can guess."

"And can you speak so kindly to me?"

"There is no reason we should not be kind to you; kindness is what you want, and we have to give, so it may be a comfort to us both."

"Oh! indeed, I do want it," said Paulina, recurring to her present and pressing troubles. "See here, Harry Aikin," she added, picking up the note she had dropped; "do you advise me what to do; this comes from my hus—" She hesitated: she felt this was no time for deception, and she added, "from him I called my husband."

Aikin read the note, which was as follows:—

"I am blown, and must make a voyage up the river to *Lockport*—save yourself—the police dogs are on the scent—*look to the black trunk.*"

"You must tell me the truth, Paulina, or I can be of no service to you. How long have you lived with this man?"

"Six months."

“How long have you known him?”

“The same time, Harry Aikin,” she replied, without raising her eyes; for, with the companions of her innocent days, came the feeling of shame.

“Do you know what he is taken up for?”

“I don’t; but I guess for passing counterfeit bills.”

“Have you been concerned with him? Answer truly, Paulina.”

“Well—he has given me money to spend, and told me to ask no questions, and he would tell me no lies. I never knew a true note from a false one.”

“Did you not believe you were passing counterfeit money?”

“I did not *know* that I was, and that is the most I can say, Harry Aikin; but, as true as I live, I have pawned my ear-rings and my finger-rings rather than offer this money, and I did not use it till I had nothing more the pawnbrokers would take; that *is* the truth, Harry. I have not long to live, I am sure I have not. Take pity on me, Harry Aikin, and save me from finishing my wretched life in the state prison! Susan! Susan! beg him! Oh! think of old times in Essex!”

“Be sure, be sure, Paulina, Harry will do all he can for you.”

“Yes, that I will; no time must be lost: stay with her, Susan, till I return.”

“You ain’t going to inform against me?” said the miserable woman, springing after him; but, before he could reply, she shrunk back, self-condemned, and burst into tears.

“It’s so long,” she said, “since I have had any

hing to do with anybody I could believe in! I am a poor creature, Susan! I can remember the time when I felt above you; and now it seems too much for you to speak to such as me!"

It seemed a great relief to her to confess her faults; to retrace the past, and, looking through the dark way she had trodden, to catch now and then a glimpse of her early days. With a sprinkling of kind words from Susan, she went on as follows:—

"Oh, Susan Aikin, you that have an honest husband, and good children, and are *content to be poor*, you don't know the feelings of the fallen. Don't you think it's some excuse for me that I had such a poor bringing up? The first I can remember was my mother talking about my pretty eyes, and so on, and curling my hair; and the main thing was to get me handsome outside-things; how I used to despise your clothes and Lottie's; it was all, all of a piece. Mother said she could not afford to send me to the subscription-school; but, when that dancing-school was set up in Essex, I was sent to that. Do you remember I begged Uncle Phil to let you go, but he would not hear to it: he said 'you danced about your work, and you danced to school, and that was the dancing for poor folks.'"

"Father was right," said Susan, with a smile at the characteristic reply she had forgotten.

"Yes, he was indeed right. Uncle Phil was always reckoned simple-minded; but I have known all sorts of people, and I can tell you, Susan, that those who set their minds to do the right thing, be they ever so simple, go straight head—while

your bright folks slump on the right hand and on the left. But where was I—oh, looking back—a dreary prospect! I grew up a poor, ignorant, thoughtless, vain thing—but, Susan, I was not hard-hearted; even then, had I got into good hands—had I married a solid man, and had children to take care of, I should have been, not such a wife and mother as you are, but I might have been a decent woman—and that was what I had secret cravings to be, even when I had a carriage at my command, and elegant rooms and furniture.”

“Poor Paulina!”

“Yes, Susan, most to be pitied then; for then I was most blinded to all good; I can see it now, even from these depths. You know mother married a rich old man, what we thought rich, and we moved to New-York; I had always lots of young men after me; I lived at the theatre, and the public balls, and such places, and cared for nothing but dress and flattery. Morris Finley courted me—I always liked him—and if I had married him then—but there’s no use in looking back; I wonder if his conscience would be easy if he could see me the poor ruined wretch I am now. Hark!—what noise is that?”

“It’s only my children and Juliet, playing.”

“Poor Juliet!—do you think Harry will get me clear, Susan?”

“I hope so; but had you not better compose yourself, and try to get a little sleep?”

“Sleep! I cannot. If you knew what a relief it is to me to unburden my heart—to have a good person willing to sit down by me as you do. As I was saying, when my stepfather died, and we had

nothing left, and Morris Finley felt he was going ahead in the world, he left me. We went to Essex, and then came back to New-York; mother set up the milliner's business--temptation was on every side; and no wonder that such a poor weak creature as I fell. There was nothing to bind me to virtue. My mother, poor soul, died; and her death set me to thinking; and then, if a hand had been stretched out to me in kindness, it would have saved me; but the good set their faces against the bad—they do, Susan—I mean common good folks. You cannot tell what it is to have the eye of your fellow-creature look on you with scorn, or turned from you as if you were too vile to look upon: I have felt this, and I went from bad to worse."

"Why did not you come to us, Paulina? We would have done what we could for you."

"I was afraid to, Susan; I did not suppose there was anybody on earth good enough to pity me, because I was wicked; and, for that, most needed their pity."

"Then, Paulina, you must have concluded there were no true followers of Him who came to seek and save those that were lost?"

"Maybe I have my own evil courses, in part, to thank for such thoughts, Susan; but, then, is it not strange that human creatures don't make more allowance for one another? They say sick folks feel for sick folks. Sin is the worst of sickness, and are there any quite free from it?"

"You are right, Paulina; the strong should uphold the weak—the well should look after the sick."

“That’s what I mean, Susan, and I believe you are so very good you practise it; but it is not strange I dreaded to see your face; and all that Juliet told me of you and your children, bringing up to be a blessing and honour to the land, made me more and more ashamed of myself. Thank God, I never had a child. I do love Juliet—you see I am not fit to take care of her—but I did not always tyrannise over her—not when—”

“Not when you were yourself, Paulina.” Paulina nodded assent: she had not courage in words to confess her intemperance. “Juliet was true to you,” continued Susan; “she seems grateful for your kindness to her.”

“Does she—does Juliet feel grateful to me?”

“She does, Paulina; and that ought to be a comfort to you.”

“It is—it is; thank God, there is one creature on earth the better for my having lived! My life! Oh God, forgive me!—poor Juliet—when I am gone, Susan, you will see to her, won’t you?”

“I will do the best I can.”

“Thank you, Susan; then I shall die easy as to her. I have done but little, though I never quite lost sight of my promise to her poor dying mother.”

“Who was her mother, Paulina?”

“No one that you ever heard of. She called her name Maria Brown. I never saw her till she was near her death. The night before she died I sat behind her, and held her up while she wrote a few lines, and, taking a miniature from her neck, sealed them up together. She was so weak she fainted then, and when she came to she said she

would direct the packet the next day, and tell me what to do with it. I slept by her; but, dear me! I had taken some hot gin-and-water—for I was troubled with a cold stomach—and I slept sound and late, and when I waked she was dead and cold. Poor little Juliet! I never shall forget how she lay with her arms round her mother's neck till they sent a coffin from the almshouse; it seemed as if the child were glued there."

"Did you not open the packet, Paulina?"

"Yes; but no names were mentioned. Her letter was to her father, but it was only signed with initials."

"Were they M. B.?" eagerly asked Susan, as a faint hope dawned upon her.

"M. B.—B.—no, I am pretty sure it was not B. it might have been B. L.; I think it was L."

"You have preserved the packet?"

"I did, carefully; but in our last move it was stolen or lost!"

CHAPTER XV.

THE RICH MAN'S CHARITIES.

"Many a house is full where the mind is unfurnished and the heart is empty; and no hovel of mere penury ought ever to be so sad as that house."—DEWEY.

IT was near ten o'clock when Henry Aikin, in pursuance of his benevolent designs for Paulina, rung at Morris Finley's door, and told the servant,

in reply to his saying Mr. Finley was dressing for a party, that he had pressing business, and must speak with him. The servant left Aikin in the entry, and, entering the drawing-room, pushed the door to after him, but not so close as to prevent Aikin hearing the following dialogue:—

“There’s somebody, ma’am, in the entry, wants to speak with Mr. Finley.”

“Why did not you tell him he was not at home?”

“Because he is, ma’am.”

“Pshaw, Tom, you know he is going out immediately, and it’s all the same thing. Do you know who it is?”

“No, ma’am.”

“Is it a gentleman?”

“He speaks like one, ma’am.”

“You certainly know, Tom—is he a gentleman, or only a man?”

“He is dressed like a man, ma’am.”

“Tom, you must get over tormenting me this way: I’ve told you a hundred times the distinction.” Tom smiled. He evidently had in his mind something like the old distinction of the poet, though he could not, or dared not, express it—

“Worth makes the man—the want of it, the fellow.”

“Well, well,” added Mrs. Finley, “show him in, and tell Mr. Finley.”

Aikin entered with that air of blended modesty and independence that characterized him; certainly with no look of inferiority, for he felt none; and, as Mrs. Finley’s eye fell on his fine countenance, hers relaxed, and she was in the dilemma, for a moment, of not knowing whether to class

him with the *somebodys* or *nobodys*; but her glance descended to the plain and coarse garments of our friend in time to change a half-made courtesy to a salutation befitting an inferior. "Sit down," she said, waving her hand to the nearest chair.

Aikin took the offered seat, and awaited, with what patience he could, the forthcoming of the master of the splendid mansion, observing what was before him with a feeling, not of envy or covetousness, but with deep joy and thankfulness for the virtue and true happiness of his humble home. Miss Sabina Jane Finley, now a young lady of twelve years, after surveying Aikin from top to toe, said to her mother, in a suppressed but audible voice, "*Gentleman!*"

Mrs. Finley seemed to have what she, no doubt, thought a truly genteel unconsciousness of "the *man's*" presence. She was very richly dressed for a ball; but, as is a common case with poor human nature, she was transferring the fault of her faded and time-stricken face to her milliner. "I declare, Sabina Jane," she said, surveying herself in the mirror, "I never will get another cap of Thompson—these flowers are blue as the heavens."

"You selected them yourself, mamma."

"To be sure I did; but how could I tell how they would look in the evening?"

"Why don't you wear your new French cap, mamma?"

"Don't be a fool, child—have not I worn that twice already? Pull down that blonde over my shoulder—how it whoops! This is the second time Smetz has served me this way. This gown sets like fury. I never go out but I have some

trial that spoils all my pleasure. Don't let me see you prink so, miss," turning to her daughter, and pulling from her head a dress cap, that she was trying on and arranging with all the airs and graces of a fine lady; "I have told you a thousand times, Sabina Jane," she continued, "not to be fond of dress!—Well, Tom, what is wanted now?"

"That French gentleman, ma'am, what teached Miss Sabina Jane, is to call early for his money; and if you'd please to give it to me to-night—"

"I can't attend to it to-night—tell him to call again."

"He has called again and again, ma'am; and he says his wife is sick—and he looks so distressed-like."

"I have not the money by me to-night, Tom."

"Shall I ask Mr. Finley for it, ma'am?"

"No, Tom."

The image of the unhappy foreigner haunted Tom's imagination; and, after lingering for a moment with the door in his hand, he said—"Maybe ma'am don't remember Mr. Finley gave out the money for Mr. Felix."

Mrs. Finley did remember well that she had received the money, and had spent it that very afternoon for a most tempting piece of French embroidery—"a love of a pocket handkerchief," that cost only thirty dollars!—the price of poor Monsieur Felix's labour for two quarters, with an indolent and neglected child. "Shut the door, Tom," she said; "I can't be bothered about this money now; tell Mr. Felix to call after breakfast." Tom despaired and withdrew. "How impertinent Tom

is getting," added Mrs. Finley; "but this is the way of all the servants in this country."

The housemaid now entered, and announced that Miss Rosa (a three-year old girl) had been throwing up the custard, and pie, and raisins, and so on, that she ate at dinner.

"Dear me! poor thing!" exclaimed the mother, "what a weak stomach she has! Does Nancy want me to come up and see her?"

"Nancy is out, ma'am."

"Out yet? I don't know how she could think of going out at all, when she told me at tea-time that Rosa was feverish. I thought there was *one* faithful servant in the world, but now I give up." Mrs. Finley went to look after her child, while Aikin was making his own mental comments on the reasonableness of a parent, who expected more fidelity from a hireling for paltry wages, than she practised herself, with all the stimulants of the responsibilities and happiness of a mother. Fortunately, for he had become very impatient, he was not left long to ponder on this inconsistency. Finley came in, dressed and perfumed for the party. "Ah, Harry Aikin," he said, after a momentary surprise, "is it you—how are you?"

"Well, thank you, Morris."

"What impudence," thought Miss Sabina Jane, "for that man to call my papa Morris!"

"I have some *private* business with you," added Aikin, glancing at the young lady.

"Sabina Jane," said Finley, "tell your mamma the carriage is waiting—these fellows charge so abominably for waiting." This last remark was evidently a hint to Aikin to be brief.

But Aikin wanted no such spur. He communicated concisely Paulina's condition and wants ; and, knowing that Finley's conscience was of the sluggish order, he tried to rouse it by recalling vividly to his remembrance the past—the days of Paulina's innocence and beauty, and Finley's devotion to her. But Finley slurred it over like a long-forgotten dream, that would not afford the slightest basis for a claim upon his charity.

“She is in a shocking condition, to be sure, Aikin,” he said ; “but, then, I make it an invariable rule never to give but to those that I know to be worthy.”

“There is much to be done for our fellow-creatures, Finley, besides giving gifts to the worthy.”

“Oh, I know that ; and I subscribe liberally to several of our institutions.”

“But will you do nothing towards encouraging this poor, homeless, friendless creature to repentance and reformation ?”

“Pshaw ! Aikin, they never reform.”

“If that is true, a part of the sin must lie at our doors, who afford them no helps. But there is no time to discuss this : Paulina, I fear, will not be able to prove her sincerity. She has, it seems to me, but little while to live ; if I can save her from the police, I shall try hard to keep her where she is, that her little remnant of life may be spent with her old friends, who will care for her body and soul.”

“Oh, well, if you really think she is going to make a die of it, I am willing to give you something for her.”

Finley took out his pocketbook, and after, as

Aikin could not but suspect, looking for a smaller sum he gave him a five-dollar note, with the air of one who is conferring an astounding obligation. Aikin expressed neither surprise nor gratitude; but, quietly putting up the note, he said, "You know, Finley, money is not the most important thing I had to ask. I want you to go to the police-office with me. You are a great merchant, and your name is well known in the city; I am nobody, and it may be necessary for me to get my statement endorsed. Come, it is not five minutes' walk for you."

"Why, bless you, man, don't you see I'm going out! there's my wife coming down stairs now."

"Let her go in the carriage—you can follow her."

"Oh! that's impossible—she would not go alone into a party for the world."

"Can she not wait till your return?"

"No; it is not reasonable to ask it—it's late now—and—and—"

"Good night; I have wasted my time here," said Aikin, cutting short Finley's excuses, and leaving him trying to silence his conscience by dwelling on the five dollars he had given—by fretting at the deused folly of going out when people were tired and wanted to go to bed—and by joining in his wife's vituperation against Nancy and all her tribe.

CHAPTER XVI.

ANOTHER RICH MERCHANT'S HOUSE.

“I WILL go straight to Mr. Beckwith’s,” thought Aikin, as he left Finley’s; “it is late, to be sure, but never too late nor too early with him to do a kind act.” Mr. Beckwith was one of a very rich firm, who employed Aikin as their carman. He rung at the door, and was admitted by Jacob, a coloured man, who had grown gray in Mr. Beckwith’s service.

“Walk in, sir,” said he, civilly, leading the way to the drawing-room, where Mrs. Beckwith, with her cloak on, was sitting beside her eldest daughter, warming her feet, while her two eldest sons sat at the table drawing. As Aikin entered, Mrs. Beckwith saluted him civilly, as she would any other stranger; and, while one of the young men rose to set a chair for him, she made some courteous remarks upon the weather and walking; and then, after Jacob had returned, and said Mr. Beckwith would be down directly, she resumed the conversation with her daughter, which Aikin’s entrance had interrupted.

“Did you find Madame Felix very ill, mother?” asked the young lady.

“Very ill, Susan, and wanting every thing: no wood, no comforts of any sort. The poor man has money due to him, but he says he cannot get it.”

“Why didn't he let us know their condition sooner?”

“Ah, Susan, it's very hard for such a man to beg.”

“But it should not be called begging, should it, mother? If, as you and father say, we are all children of one family, when one wants what another has to spare, I do not see why the one should not ask, or the other should think it such a mighty favour to give.”

“You have the right feeling about it, my dear; but the difficulty is to reconcile the charities of life with the spirit of independence and self-reliance which is so necessary to industry and exertion: but where is Louisa?”

“She is sitting with mammy: her head has been much worse since you went out, and Louisa will not leave her.”

“I am glad of it: many a night has mammy sat by your bedsides, patiently watching over you. But, Kate,” added the mother, for the first time espying a child of eight years watching the progress of her brothers' drawing, “how happens it you are up yet?”

“Oh, mother, we have had such a funny time, planning houses!”

“Planning houses! what do you mean?”

An explanation followed, by which it appeared that Mr. Beckwith contemplated building a block of houses, to rent to those who could afford to pay only a low rent. The houses were to contain every convenience and comfort compatible with a reasonable per centage on the money invested. Mr. Beckwith had set his children to drawing

plans for these houses, not so much to test their skill in draughting as their knowledge of the wants of the poor, and their zeal for their accommodation. Kate amused herself with relating the various failures and successes of the boys—how one had left out the chimneys and the other the windows—to all which Aikin listened with eager interest, notwithstanding the pressing nature of his business.

Not so much time had passed as has been occupied in relating this scene, when Mr. Beckwith appeared, and, after speaking to Aikin, turned to his wife, saying, “My dear, this is my friend Aikin, of whom you have often heard me speak.” Mrs. Beckwith’s countenance lighted up with that expression so common when a person is first introduced to a stranger for whom favourable impressions are entertained. Aikin, modest man that he was, was gratified with this involuntary tribute. How many opportunities of strengthening the bonds of human brotherhood by a friendly look, or a kind word, are passed by and lost for ever! “Lo! is not a word better than a gift? but both are with a gracious man.” Aikin communicated his business to Mr. Beckwith, and without any delay they were on their way to the police-office, where Aikin told as much of Paulina’s story to Mr. Justice H—— as he deemed necessary for the purposes of justice; and the said justice being more moved than was his wont by Aikin’s appeal in Paulina’s behalf, and authorized by the assurance of so substantial a person as Beckwith, of the great firm of B. B. and Co., in his reliance on Aikin’s testimony; and, moreover, having al-

ready appeased the demands of justice by the detection and apprehension of the gang associated with Smith, vouchsafed to assure Aikin that, provided the black trunk was forthcoming in the morning, no proceedings should be instituted against Paulina.

“ Good night, Mr. Beckwith,” said Aikin, as he parted from his friend at the corner of the street—
“ I am obliged to you.”

“ Oh, no, no, Aikin—I am the person obliged ; for I go to bed the happier for having done you this service.”

Aikin was a reflecting man—and, as he walked hurriedly home, eager to relieve Paulina of a part of her miserable burden, he made many reflections upon the different scenes he had witnessed that evening—at his own home—in Paulina's room—at Morris Finley's—and at Mr. Beckwith's ; and he was confirmed in his previous conclusion, that riches consist not in the abundance of possessions, nor poverty in their scantiness ; that the mind is the treasure-house ; and, finally, that Paulina, though poor indeed, was not much poorer than Morris Finley and his wife

CHAPTER XVII.

A CURE FOR THE HEARTACHE.

THE next day, after Aikin had finished his morning devotions—this good man never ventured upon the business, temptations, and trials of the day, without first committing himself and his household to Him who “heareth those that call on him”—Juliet was observed to rise from her knees and rest her head on the back of the chair, so as to screen her face, while her bosom heaved and her tears fell on the floor. The children, quick to see and to sympathize, gathered round her; one said, “Do you feel sick, Juliet?”—another, “What is the matter, Juliet?”—and little Ruth, who was fresh from a moral lesson she had received from her Aunt Lottie, the amount of which was, that sin, in all its modifications, was the thing to be cried for in this world, Ruth asked, “Have you been naughty, Juliet?” Still Juliet did not reply, till Mrs. Aikin drew her towards her, and, setting her on her lap, said—“Tell me, Juliet, what troubles you?”

“Oh, ma’am,” she answered, “I know, by Mr. Aikin’s prayer, that my mother, as I call her, is going to die, and then I shall have to go away from you all—and I shall be all alone in the world.” The children cast an imploring glance at their mother, which said, as plain as words could express

it—"Pray tell her that our home shall be her home—our friends her friends." The elder children knew it belonged to their parents, and not to them, to give such an assurance; but the younger ones thought only of the quickest way to solace the poor child; and Ruth, putting her cheek to Juliet's, whispered—"Mother will be your mother, and, if you want an aunt, you shall have a part of my Aunt Lottie."

Little Phil, the youngling of the flock and grand father's pet, echoed Ruth's meaning, shouting—"And if you want a danfather, you shall have a piece of my danfather!" How certain it is that children will imbibe the qualities of the moral atmosphere in which they live. Parents, remembering this, should trust more to their examples, and expect less from their precepts. Tears fell from Mrs. Aikin's eyes—tears from the fountain of those feelings "that have less of earth in them than heaven;"—"My good little children," she said, "we will try not to disappoint you—wipe away your tears, Juliet—think of another thing Mr. Aikin said in his prayer—'God is the father of the fatherless;' be sure, therefore, you cannot be alone in the world."

"Come here, Juliet," said Mr. Barlow; and Juliet turned to him with a brightened face, verifying the wise man's saying, that, "as the dew assuageth the heat, so is a kind word."—"You and I, Juliet," continued the good man, "have been led into the same fold, and, please God, we will not separate again. Will you live with me and be my little housekeeper—or room-keeper? I have now," he added, turning, as if in explanation, to Susan

Aikin, "enough for us both ; say, Juliet, will you go and live with me ?"

Juliet hung her head ; the children looked as if they were afraid she would say yes.

"Ah," added Mr. Barlow, in a tone of disappointment, "I thought you loved me, Juliet."

"So I do, sir ; but—but it's so pleasant living here."

William Aikin, whose expressions were as impulsive as his feelings, clapped his hands, and the children all manifested, some in one way, some in another, their delight.

"Juliet is right," said Mr. Barlow, in a low tone, to Harry Aikin ; "it is so pleasant living here, that, when I go away, I shall have that dismal feeling Juliet so dreads, that feeling of being *alone*. Oh, how many times have I wished the goodness and happiness in your family could be known. It would be a lesson to many a proud rich man—to many a discontented poor one."

"That's just what I say, Mr. Barlow," said Uncle Phil, rubbing his hands ; "I tell you our folks are samples, and the whole secret of it is, that every one does their best—that is to say, lives up to their light, and if anybody can do any better than that, I should like to know how ; but come, the breakfast is cooling while we are sarmonizing, as it were."

The breakfast was despatched ; Aikin went to his daily business ; Aunt Lottie and Juliet to nursing Paulina ; Uncle Phil to a stroll in the sunshine with little Phil ; Mr. Barlow, it being Saturday and a holyday, sat down in a corner with a book ; and Mrs. Aikin was setting all "*to rights*"

in that quiet, efficient way where every stroke tells, and marks the expert housewife.

“Did you learn any thing of poor little Juliet’s parentage from the woman above?” asked Mr. Barlow at the first convenient opportunity. Mrs. Aikin related all she had learned; nothing could well be more unsatisfactory. Even Susan Aikin, whose bright, healthy moral vision always perceived the first streak of daylight, could see nothing “*comforting*” in it. As she finished, Mr. Barlow heaved a sigh, and then said, “You might have thought my proposal to take Juliet very strange.”

“Oh, no, sir; I am sure it is quite natural to feel as if you wanted to stretch a wing over the poor child; but—but the thing is, a girl wants women to look after her; and I have concluded, when Paulina is gone, to take Juliet into our family.”

“What, Mrs. Aikin, with all your children?”

“Yes, sir; when one is used to have the care of a good many, an addition does not seem to make any difference.* We always have a little something to spare—and Juliet, poor child, might be fed from the crumbs that fall from the table.”

“But then there are other expenses besides her food.”

“Yes, sir; I have considered that, and determined, as long as my health is spared, to work one hour extra every night; what I can thus earn will certainly cover all Juliet’s expenses to us—so, I see my way quite clear; it is a comfort, sir, not to lose the opportunity.”

* An argument similar to this we have often heard used by one whose sheltering charities seem only to be limited by the wants of those that come within her sphere.

“Blessed are those who seek such comforts,” said Mrs. Aikin. “But this poor woman—will she be willing to leave Juliet with you?”

“She will be glad to. Her only desire now seems to be, for the little time that remains, to do right. Oh, Mr. Barlow, I believe there are many people in wicked courses who would turn from them if they only had some true friend. I wish Paulina to stay here the little time she has to live, so does my husband; but he will not run in debt, not even to help the distressed, which is a great temptation. It takes more than one would think to keep such a family as ours in necessaries; and, through the blessing of kind Providence upon our exertions, we have always had those, and some luxuries too.”

“What luxuries?” asked Mr. Barlow, with a smile.

“A good warm fire all day*—and a fire for Lottie’s room whenever she wants it; plenty of books for the children, and a share in a library for ourselves—and the pleasure of going to bed every Saturday night without owing a shilling, and a little something in the Savings’ Bank against a wet day, and—and—” Susan hesitated, for really she could not remember any thing else that did not come within the large class of necessaries. Mr. Barlow finished her list—

“And a shelter and food at your table for a friendless stranger. Mrs. Aikin, if I could help you to put your kind wishes into operation for this poor woman, it would be a real pleasure to me. I can

* A little poor boy specified this to me as one of the exclusive privileges of the rich.

let the room I have taken in Crosby-street, and pay the rent of hers, if you will permit me to be a boarder in your family, and retain my place in your father's room till this woman has no longer occasion for hers."

"You are very kind, sir ; but there is back rent to be paid. However, we will talk it over when my husband comes, and contrive the best we can."

The dialogue of our friends was interrupted by the appearance of a gentleman who announced himself as Mr. Beckwith, and Susan being summoned to Paulina's room, he was left with Mr. Barlow. After a little playful talk with the sweet-tempered chubby children, Mr. Beckwith, feeling his way with that delicacy that marks the man who does not exclude the poor from the courtesies used among equals in fortune, made some remarks about Aikin, and the aspect of the family, that led Mr. Barlow to tell a portion of his own story, and to relate the Aikins' succouring charities to Juliet, and their kindness to the poor outcast Paulina. He spoke of their exemplary performance of their domestic duties, and of the advancement of their children in knowledge and virtue. "A country may well boast its equality," he said, in conclusion, "that has such families as this in it. I never should have credited what goes on beneath this humble roof if I had not witnessed it. Here are the genuine fruits of Christianity, and such fruit as could only come to perfection in a land where the government and institutions are based on the gospel principle of equal rights and equal privileges to all."

"You are an Englishman, Mr. Barlow. Do

you think, setting aside the greater compensation our working-men get than yours, they are happier?"

"That is setting aside a vast deal, sir. This superior compensation represents the comforts of life, the means of education. What could Aikin have been in my country with his shattered health, his children, and helpless father-in-law, and invalid sister? These *independent dependants* would have been tenants of the almshouse—Aikin himself, most probably, there, and his children supported by the parish. When I see, sir, that a man so conditioned can bring up a family as he does, in such a city as this—his boys to be intelligent and independent citizens, and his daughters to be respectable, well-informed wives and mothers,—I must think this, sir, the happiest country in the world for the labouring man."

"I believe you are right; but we do not make the most of our privileges. There is no telling what a nation, with our institutions, might become, if the domestic virtues were better understood and practised by the labouring classes,—if their foundation were laid in religion and children were brought up from their cradles to be temperate and true, and industrious and frugal,—if every opportunity were seized for improving them in knowledge, and in the *practice* of the soul-preserving virtues. The rich here can make no separating lines which the poor cannot pass. It is the poor who fence themselves in with ignorance, and press themselves down with shiftlessness and vice. If there were more such families as this, the rich would feel less exultation in their wealth, the poor that there was no degradation in their

poverty. The rich would get rid of their pride, the poor of their jealousy; and we should admit, not theoretically and in our prayers, but practically, that we are children of one family, and that the happiness and advancement of one is the happiness and advancement of all. I am fortunate," added Mr. Beckwith, in conclusion, "to have found you here, sir. Here is a trifling sum for the poor woman up stairs; it will, I hope, enable your friends to do what they wish for her—a far greater benefaction than any money I can give." Mrs. Aikin entered just in time to make her acknowledgments, and she made them as if the kindness were done to herself. Mr. Beckwith changed the subject. "This house must be small for your family, Mrs. Aikin?"

"Yes, sir, but we contrive to make it do."

"What is your rent?"

"For the whole, sir, one hundred and fifty dollars."

"For the whole house, excepting that poor woman's room?"

"I wish it were, sir, but there are two rooms in the garret rented to different persons—the best at six, the other four shillings a week: then there is a good room on this floor that rents at seventy-five dollars a year; and the family in the cellar pay a dollar a week. Paulina's room is twenty shillings a week."

"And pray, Mrs. Aikin, what accommodations do you get for your hundred and fifty dollars?"

"There is this room—you see what it is, sir—a pot of paint and a pail of whitewash, always ready, keep it decent. My husband made this."

she said, opening a closet, where every thing was stowed as neatly and compactly as honey in a hive; "we could not do with an open dresser in a room where we ate and slept; and here," opening a door into a little dark room,—“here is a comfortable place for the children.” Comfortable it was, though dark and small, by virtue of the most exact order and cleanliness. “Then, sir, we have the whole of the second floor, which gives us a large comfortable room for my sister, another for father, and a little room for the children. We make out very well, sir.”

“I know, Mrs. Aikin, there is a great virtue in this *making out*, but you must suffer inconvenience when you have sickness in the family?”

“Why, sir,” she replied, with a smile, “we take care not to get sick often; but, when we have needed a room for sickness, father has turned in with the boys;—father has such a contented disposition, nothing puts him out. Harry—I mean my husband, sir—says such a disposition as father’s is meat, drink, and lodging.”

“Pardon my making so many inquiries, Mrs. Aikin; believe me, it is not from idle curiosity. By what contrivance do you” (turning his eye to Mr. Barlow) “get a spare room?”

“A spare room, sir, is a blessing I never expect to have; but father has a sociable disposition, so we call his the spare room, and put a friend there when we have occasion.”

Mr. Beckwith was reminded of a certain system of philosophy which teaches that there is no material world—no actual houses, furniture, &c.,—that these things are only shadows of ideas. “Ah,”

thought he, "my friends here are really richer than many that live in four-story houses." Having an important purpose in his inquiries, he went on. "Do you not, Mrs. Aikin, experience serious inconvenience from having so many families under one roof?"

"We do, sir. I have often thought the time must come when landlords would feel more for poor people, and be more considerate who they put together. It is so difficult to keep children from bad company, poor things—they are not particular, you know, sir. 'This is the only thing that has ever really worried me about our situation: I can contrive to get along with little troubles."

"And what are the little troubles?"

"Why, sir, it is something of a trial not to have a decent steps, entry, and stairs. We have no place to store wood, so we cannot buy it in summer, which would be a great saving to us. Then, the cistern is leaky, and not half large enough to furnish water to half the tenants; and, if we set tubs under the front spout, there is always some one to dispute our right; so we have given up rain-water, and make pump-water do: since then, every one in the house offers us a portion of their rain-water; so, as my husband says, 'The peace principle is the best policy.'"

Mr. Beckwith, after making a calculation, exclaimed, "Four hundred and sixty-nine dollars is paid for the rent of this house. The whole property is not worth four thousand five hundred. But so it is all over the city; the poor pay rents out of all proportion to the rich. With the very poor and vicious this is inevitable—they are transient tenants, and

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heir pay uncertain. But the industrious and honest should not be obliged to endure such evils as you suffer, Mrs. Aikin. I trust the attention of capitalists will be attracted to this subject. Ask your husband to come to my house this evening. I am glad to have begun an acquaintance with you, Mrs. Aikin. It shall not be my fault if it end here."

Mr. Beckwith went his way, and, meditating on the power of the domestic virtues to enrich a home, and multiply the good things of this life, he repeated, mentally, those words of which he thought he had witnessed the illustration:—

"And seek not what ye shall eat and what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after, and your father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you."

CHAPTER XVIII.

LIGHT IN A DARK PLACE.

ON the morning of Mr. Beckwith's call, another and very different visiter knocked at Mrs. Aikin's door, and inquired "If there was not a woman, or *creator*, or something of that sort, by the name of Smith, living there." Mrs. Aikin boded no good, and, fearful Paulina would overhear the inquiry, she bade the man enter, answering him affirmatively while she closed the door.

"You need not be so private, mistress; I am none of her acquaintance, I can tell you, only as she under-rented two rooms of me, and went away owing me."

When the stranger entered, Juliet was reading to Mr. Barlow. She pressed his arm, whispering, "I know that man. He is horrid cross."

"Don't tremble so, my child, he'll not hurt you."

"Oh, I ain't afraid of him now—but I used to be."

This was said while Mrs. Aikin was communicating to the man the small likelihood that he would get his debt.

"I don't expect much," replied the man, "of the like of her, but I've got something that will bring something more." He took from his pocket a handkerchief, and, unrolling it, proceeded: "After that woman left my house she missed a packet.

and came back and made a terrible rummaging; but another tenant had moved in with a heap of litter, and nothing could be found of the packet. Since t'other tenant has packed off 'twixt two days, and we found this stowed away in the closet." He took out a small locket and a letter.

"That locket was *my* mother's!" exclaimed Juliet.

"*Was*, child? but it's mine *now*. I don't believe," continued the man, supposing of course that Mrs. Smith was Juliet's mother, "that it ever did belong to your mother; but you shall judge, good woman," to Mrs. Aikin. "Here is the letter—the locket was in the letter." He began reading.

"'My dear'—something, I can't tell that word; it may be father, and it may be mother; but never mind, it goes on: 'On the bed of death, and with my poor little girl beside me—'"

"Oh, it was *my own* mother that wrote it!" screamed Juliet; "don't let *him* read it!"

Forgetting her fears, she sprang forward and snatched it, repeating, with an imploring look to Mr. Barlow and Mrs. Aikin, "It is mine! it was *my own* mother wrote it!"

Mrs. Aikin soothed her, and Mr. Barlow drew her to him, whispering an assurance that she should keep it.

"What the deuse ails you, child?" asked the man; "you are welcome to the letter, though I guess it will make you all kind o' qualmish to read it. The locket I'll keep myself—the casing, I mean; the picture won't sell for any thing, though I think it's a pretty, comely-looking person. What do you think, neighbour?" holding it up to Mr

Barlow. Mr. Barlow cast his eye on the locket : he recognised an old likeness of himself ; a sudden paleness overspread his face ; he took the letter from Juliet's hand, to him unresisting ; his eye glanced rapidly over it : the blood rushed again to his cheeks, coloured deeply his pale forehead, and again retreated. He threw his arms around Juliet, laid his head on hers, and sobbed out, " My child ! Mary ! Mary ! my child ! "

Mrs. Aikin guessed the meaning of all this. She dismissed the man with the assurance that he should be paid the small sum due to him, and then left Mr. Barlow to compose himself, and give to Juliet the joyful explanation of what seemed to her a riddle.

When she returned she found them calm, and as happy as they could be ; their joy tempered by the following sad letter :—

Letter from Juliet's mother.

" MY DEAR FATHER :—On the bed of death, and with my little girl, who will soon be an orphan, beside me, I write this. My hand is stiff, and a racking cough interrupts me. I can write but a few lines at a time. Till last week I hoped to get well, consumption is so flattering.

" Dear father, I never told you any thing but truth about my situation in America ; but I could not bear to distress you and sister with the whole truth. You could not help me, so I tried to suffer patiently ; and I never felt alone, for when we have no human friend nor help, then it is we feel God to be near. Ronald turned out what I might have expected when he persuaded me to marry

him against your will and consent. He was always headstrong—poor Ronald! We lived comfortably in Canada for a while. Oh! what pleasure I took in being saving, and making his pay hold out. An ensign's pay is small, father; and for a while after Juliet was born, he seemed to feel what it was to be a father, and what he owed to the child God had given him, and it seemed happiness enough for him to be with us. Then I wrote you often, and you know all about that time, father! How soon it passed! Bad people drew him away from me, and bad people and hard drinking hardened his heart; and often and often, when I have gone to meet him in the damp night, wild with fear that something had happened to him, and waited hours and hours, he has come, and—; but, poor Ronald! I can't bear to bring up his sins now! But, oh! my poor little child, how she has suffered for his faults! There were times when the sight of her brought him to a momentary penitence; but he had no true joy in her. I have seen what bitter drops conscience has poured into the sweet fountain of parental love. I have seen him when the tones of innocence and the look of love were cutting reproaches to him. Poor Ronald!”

“ I suffered, father, in many ways—when, and where, and how, there is no use in telling now. I found patience a great help, and in the darkest times I could pray for my poor husband. Had he but turned to the right path, I would have welcomed poverty, sickness, hardship of any sort; but

the wounded spirit that cometh from the sin of those we love, who can bear?"

"Ronald failed in military duty, and lost his commission, and changed his name to Brown. We came to New-York. This was a dark time, father. I was sometimes, for weeks, alone with my child. He came to me to die. I remembered *Him* who forgiveth liberally, and upbraideth not. I watched him, day and night, till he died. May I not hope for him? but, alas!—alas! his life was a continual violation of God's laws. 'Towards the last his mind was gone.—Poor Ronald!"

"I went to the British consul. He was *very kind* to me; and from some English people, with true English hearts, he got money enough to send me and Juliet home to you. I was on board the ship when, as I wrote to you, symptoms of the varioloid appeared. I was sent off. Juliet and I both had the disease. My disappointment aggravated it with me. I was left low. I have worked a little since, and sometimes hoped to earn money to go home to you. I had spent, in my sickness, all that was given to me. I have written but once, hoping always to have something better to write. But it's all over now! Don't mourn about it, father—nor you, dear sister,—it is God's will, and never—never has it seemed hard to me to bend to his will. When poor Ronald went astray from *His* will—that I felt to be hard."

sorrow for her sufferings, and of gratitude that a husband's unfaithfulness, that poverty and sickness, had all been God's ministers to bring her to heaven.

CHAPTER XIX.

A DEATH-BED.

A PROFITABLE lesson in the economy of human life might have been learned in the dying Paulina's apartment. Her last excess, her last draught of gin, taken in an excited and feverish state, had accelerated her disease. She had a raging fever, and her cough was attended by spasms that, at each recurrence, threatened her with instant death. Charlotte, after in vain searching for some comfortable garments among the relics of Paulina's evil days—after turning over stained silk dresses, tattered gauzes, yellow blonde laces, and tangled artificial flowers, had furnished from her own stores clean apparel suitable for a sick woman.

"Oh, Lottie, please," said Paulina, pointing to the various articles of old finery that hung about the room, or over the sides of her broken band-boxes, "please put them all out of my sight—they seem like so many witnesses against me—they taunt me for my sin and folly. How good this clean snug cap feels—how kind it is of you to lend me these things!"

“I have plenty, Paulina ; we always calculate to have a good store of necessaries. Susan and I think, if we don't want them, they will come in play for somebody—and, with a little industry and forecast, they are easily got. You can buy a dozen such caps as that of mine for the half of what one of yours cost, Paulina.”

“I can't help that now,” retorted Paulina, pettishly ; “I did not mean to speak so,” she added, after a moment's pause—“but oh, Lottie, every thing stings me.”

“And I am sure,” said the gentle Charlotte, “I did not mean to hurt your feelings ; but I did not know but you might think it strange such a poor person as I should boast of abundance.”

“You poor, Lottie !—you poor !—oh, I can tell you what it is to be poor. To be without any worldly possessions is not to be poor, for you have a treasure laid up in heaven. To be what the world calls friendless is not to be poor, for you have God and conscience for friends. But to be as I am, memory tormenting !—without hope—to have no inward peace—no store of pleasant thoughts of good done ! Oh, this is poverty. Poverty is nothing *outside*, Lottie.”

For a moment, Paulina's mind would seem to have more even than its natural strength and clearness : but such bright intervals were short, and succeeded by hours when she seemed to be heavily sleeping away her existence ; and Charlotte would long to see her awaken to a consciousness of her ebbing life, and employing the little time that remained in preparation for her departure. But, alas for those who leave their preparation for

the death-bed ! who defer to a few suffering hours the work for which life is given !

“ Who would have thought, Lottie,” said Susan, as the sisters sat together, watching Paulina’s troubled sleep, “ that you would have lived to nurse her on her death-bed ! It is teaching to look at you and then at her.”

And, as Susan said, it was “ *teaching*.” It taught that, if the laws of nature, which are the laws of God, are obeyed, the frailest, most delicate constitution may be preserved ; and that the most vigorous health must be destroyed by a violation of those laws. Charlotte, by strict temperance, by regular exercise, by prudence and thoughtfulness, had preserved the little remnant of health left by the cruel accident she had endured in her childhood. But, what was far better, by the religious performance of her duties—by contentment, both with the gifts and the *denials* of Providence—by forgetting herself, and remembering everybody else—by loving, and (a most sure consequence) being loved in turn—she had preserved that sweet serenity of spirit that shone through her pale face, and all those faculties in active operation, that, slender and fragile as she was, made her the comfort of her family ; the dear Aunt Lottie of the home she blessed.

Fifteen years before Paulina was the picture of health, and in possession of the virtues (or rather accidents) which are usually found with a sound and vigorous constitution. She was good-humoured, bright, courageous, and kind-hearted. But, alas ! she was brought up by an ignorant mother, in ignorance and the excessive love of pleas-

ure. She was pretty, and she was flattered at home and abroad. That love of dress which pervades all classes of women, which grows with their growth and strengthens with their strength, which is cherished by the conversation of their own sex and the flattery of the other, which degrades the rich and ruins so many poor girls, was one of the most efficient causes of Paulina's destruction.*

"Do you remember," continued Susan, "how clear and full her eye was? and now how sunken, and those yellow, dropsical-looking bags about it; and her cheeks, I remember father used to say they looked like rare-ripes; dear me! how the bones stick out now where the fair round flesh was; and how like old tripe it looks where she has had the paint on; and her lips, what a bright cherry-red pair they were: dear! dear! how blue they are; and see her neck and arms, Lottie, that were so plump and white, now how shrivelled and skinny they look. Dear Lottie," she added, "I can't help saying it, as I turn my eye from Paulina to you; you seem like a temple in which the spirit of God dwelleth. Oh! what a comfort it is to have cherished, and not abused. God's good gifts!"

* A gentleman, whose uncommon sagacity and rare benevolence have had an ample field of observation and employment in the office which he for a long while held, of superintendent of the House of Refuge in this city, has said that he believed the love of dress was a most efficient cause of the degradation and misery of the young females of the city. If this is so, should not the reformation begin among the educated and reflecting? Among those who can afford indulgence? How can a lady, whose presses are teeming with French millinery and embroidery, enjoin simplicity and economy on her domestics? But this is a subject that demands a volume; or, rather, that demands examples instead of precepts.

“Hush! Susan, she is waking!” and poor Paulina awoke from a troubled dream, coughing and gasping. “Oh!” said she, as soon as she could speak, “I thought I was dead and in misery, but I am still living; and, Lottie, does not the Bible say—I have almost forgotten all I knew about the Bible—but does it not say there is hope for the living?”

“Yes, Paulina; if they repent of their evil deeds, and turn to the Lord, there is with him plenteous redemption.”

“Does it say so?”—a suffocating fit of coughing interrupted her. “My mind,” she continued, when she could get her breath, “My mind is so confused, I have so given up my thoughts to folly and sin, that I can’t even think good thoughts; how can I repent?—I am so sleepy—” and, as she yet spoke, the words died away on her lips, and a heavy sleep came over her, from which she started as from a nightmare.

“I have done one good thing,” she said: “I was good to Juliet!”

“That should comfort you!” said Susan, seizing, as eagerly as a drowning man catches at a straw, at Paulina’s single consoling recollection.

“But, Susan, I was not kind as you would have been—such as I can’t be so. I did keep my evil life out of her sight; I have always paid something extra, that she might have a little room to herself.”

“That was considerate, Paulina.”

“Do you think so, Lottie? Dear me! if I had only realized how soon it would come to this, I should have lived so differently! My God! but the other day we were playing together in Essex,

and now! Do you think me very, *very* near death?" she added, rightly interpreting the expression of her friends' faces.

"You cannot have long to live," replied Charlotte, in a voice of the tenderest pity.

"Then why don't you send for a minister?"

"We will, if you wish it, Paulina."

"I do, I do—pray be quick!" Susan went to the door and despatched a messenger, while Paulina looked eagerly after her; but, when Susan returned to the bed, the poor creature shook her head and said, with the awful solemnity of deep conviction—"What good can he do me?—*It lieth between me and my Maker!*" Her lips then murmured a low, broken prayer;—suddenly stopping, she implored Lottie to pray for her. "I cannot pray," she said; "don't let me go to sleep, Susan." Susan chafed her temples and hands, while Charlotte knelt and besought pardon for the dying woman, as a confiding child asks favours from a parent she supremely loves. Her prayer expressed her faith in the compassions of God, as revealed by his son; her face shone with love and mercy, from her soul, his faint image. But poor Paulina was past all comfort. When Charlotte finished, she said, faintly—"Say it again, Lottie, I could not hear you. Come nearer, I don't see you!—Give me air!—did mother speak!—no, I mean the minister!—has he come?—tell Juliet—no, not that—thank you, Susan—my God!—it's so sudden!—help me, Lottie!" And thus, uttering at intervals broken sentences, more and more incoherent, she continued almost unconscious of the ministrations of her

friends, till she sunk into a lethargy which ended in death.

The sisters wept over her such tears as angels might shed. "I remember," said Susan, "almost crying my eyes out when mother died; I have often cried, Lottie, to see you patiently bearing cruel pain, and I cried till my tears seemed all spent when my angel baby died—but I never shed such bitter tears as these; there is no sight in this world so sad as the death-bed of the sinner! But, Lottie, don't you think we were some comfort to her?"

Two days after, as Aikin and his family, according to the village custom of his native place, were following the remains of Paulina to their last abode, they were intercepted by a long train of funeral carriages. In the first, in deep weeds, was Morris Finley, following the body of his only son William Arthur. The boy had died suddenly, and, according to the common saying, of a "most mysterious disease." Such mysteries are easily solved if we would honestly look at the truth. The boy's stomach had been vitiated from infancy by all sorts of delicacies and luxuries, permitted by his foolish mother. The instrument, strained to its utmost—and a slight accident—a trifling excess, destroyed him.

We need not conjecture the reflections of Morris Finley on this occasion, when, for a little while at least, he must have felt his wealth mocking him with its emptiness.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CONCLUSION.

IT was early in the October following the winter of Paulina's death that Mr. Aikin said, one fine day, to his children, "Come, if mother says yes, we'll all go down and see the new house."

As mother always said "yes" when any reasonable pleasure was offered to the children, hats and shawls were half on before the little monosyllable was fairly uttered. "Come, danfather, I tant half see it if you don't see it," said little Phil; and, "Come, Aunt Lottie, we sha'n't call it seeing it if you don't see it," said the rest of the children; and, "You and Juliet must go, Mr. Barlow," said Aikin, "and tell us how you like your new quarters;" and so, illustrating the truth that governed this family, that the good and happiness of one was the good and happiness of all, they set forth.

"Don't you and Juliet walk so fast," called out little Phil to his eager brother William, "I tant hardly hold danfather up, he stumbles so!"

"Phil is the most thoughtful and careful child you ever had, Susan; I tell you, he takes after me."

Susan, dutiful daughter as she was, could not but smile at the particular virtues her father had selected to fix the resemblance on, as she replied, "I wish he may grow up half as good, father."

“Aunt Lottie,” said little Ruth, “don’t Mr. Beckwith getting this house done so soon for father put you in mind of Mr. Barlow’s story about Aladdin’s lamp?”

“I never take much notice of such stories, Ruth but it puts me in mind of those words in the Bible, ‘The liberal man deviseth liberal things; and the good that he purposeth, that he doeth quickly.’”

“I never knew anybody like you, Aunt Lottie; you always remember something in the Bible that seems to suit.”

“Because, dear, I read the Bible more than all other books, and there is something in it fitting all occasions.”

“I love to read the Bible with you, Aunt Lottie, for it seems as if—”

“As if what?” said Ruth.

“I know what is in my mind, but I don’t know as I can express it. When our schoolmistress reads it to us, it seems as if she read it because she thought she ought to; but you seem to read it because you love it.”

None should attempt to impart religious sentiments to children who do not feel them. “The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life.”

“Where shall we begin first,” said Harry Aikin, “at the kitchen or parlour?”

“Parlour!—are we going to have a parlour? Oh, that’s what mother has been making the new carpet for!”

“Well, here it is, you see, with nice blinds, and a good grate, and all finished off neatly, so that you will have good reason for keeping every thing

in order; and here is a place for books" (he opened the doors)—"bless me, it is half full already!" The children crowded round, and eagerly took down the books, and found them to be presents from each member of the Beckwith family to each member of the Aikins, down to "Cobwebs to catch Flies," and "Mother Goose's Melodies," for little Phil. The last grandfather averred to be nothing new-fangled, and about the divertingest book that was ever writ for children. To confess the truth, Uncle Phil's chief lore was derived from these immortal lyrics.

We wish that some of our friends whom, in splendid mansions, we have heard fretting and re-pining because they had not this elegance here, and that improvement there, could have heard the exclamations and seen the sparkling eyes of our humble friends as they surveyed their new tenement. "How nice," exclaimed Anne, "this parlour will be for our 'sociables!'—it will seem like a sociable every evening, with only our own family."

"So it will, Anne," cried Uncle Phil, rubbing his hands, "I declare it's as pleasant—ena'most—as the old house in Essex." Uncle Phil's eye caught the smile on his daughter's lips: "I know, *gals*," he added, "that was kind o' shattered when we left, and this is snugger and more fixed up; but, after all, it has not *that look*."

"You are quite right, father," replied Susan; and, as she spoke, the loving matron's eye turned to her husband: "there is nothing can have *that look* that our first love has."

"This little bedroom is next to Mr. Barlow's

room, and just big enough for a single bed—this must be for Juliet,” decided one voice, and echoed many others, as they passed out of the back room into a small apartment fitted up with presses and drawers, and ventilated and lighted by glazed panels above the doors. On the second floor were three rooms, in the largest a Franklin; and Mrs. Aikin, remembering Mr. Beckwith had made inquiries as to what mode of warming her room Charlotte preferred, at once assigned this to her. “To be sure this is Aunt Lottie’s,” said little Ruth; “there is the very picture, Aunt Lottie, you was explaining to me at the print-shop window when Mrs. Beckwith stopped to speak to us.”

“‘Christ healing the sick’ is the right picture for your room, Lottie,” said her sister.

“Oh, Mrs. Beckwith is too good,” said the grateful Lottie.

“Mrs. Beckwith is very good, but nothing in the world is *too* good for you, Aunt Lottie;” and, “No, indeed!” and, “No, indeed!” was echoed by the children.

We must not detain our readers with further particulars; suffice it to say, the rooms were well ventilated; presses and drawers abounded; the kitchen had every convenience to facilitate order and lighten labour; there was a pump, that supplied water from a copious cistern—a drain—a large pantry, and close cupboards, &c. &c.; and all the conveniences, from garret to cellar, producing such an amount of comfort to a worthy family, did not, as Mr. Beckwith demonstrated by his accounts, cost so much as many a single article of ornamental furniture, nor twice as much as a

single pocket-handkerchief, or embroidered cape, sold daily by Mr. Stewart to the ladies of our city!

In the evening, at their own dwelling, the house naturally was the subject of conversation. "How very lucky," said Uncle Phil, "that Mr. Beckwith happened to build a house that suits us to a T!"

"It is not luck, father," said Harry Aikin, "when things suit precisely. Mr. Beckwith has studied the condition and wants of the labouring classes. He tells me, the attention of many rich men has been turned to the miserable tenements of the poorer classes; and he says, they believe the want of comfort and convenience about them to be a great evil to society—they think the intemperance of many men may be traced to this cause. To say nothing of the crowds huddled together in filthy unwholesome alleys, even the better houses of the poor are discouraging to the women: they get wearied out with their necessary work, and no strength and time left to clean a house that always wants cleaning. The poor husband has been working hard all day; comes home at night to a filthy, dark, cold room—his wife cross, or half sick and dumpish, and crying children—no wonder he goes out to the corner grocery, that looks so light and cheerful!"

"Then, after all, father, it's the woman, and not the house, that drives him off?"

"Ah, Will, the poor wife is disheartened; we are weak creatures, my son, and need help on every side."

"I am sure you and mother have not had so many helps."

"Have not we? I'll tell you some of my helps

Will: I had a good education, I do not mean as to learning, that is only one part of it; I was taught to use my faculties. But, first, and best of all, I early learned to seek the favour of God, and the approval of conscience. I have always had a cheerful home, a clean room to come to, clean children, and a nice wife. Your mother has performed her duties, great and small; as to the small, she never has failed a day since we were married to put on her *t'other gown* at evening, and a clean cap with a riband bow, most always of blue, the colour she knows I like best. Her trade has helped us through many a hard-rubbing day; and it has given me peace of mind, for I know, if I were taken from you, she could and would support you without running to any widows' societies or assistance societies. As to other *helps*, here has been your good grandfather setting us examples of kindness, and tending each of you as you came along; and your dear Aunt Lottie always a blessed help."

"Ah, yes! such a comfort!" interposed Susan.

"And then, Heaven-directed, came Mr. Barlow to give you better instruction; and, finally, Mr. Beckwith to help us to a house, and take nothing from our independence; for he says the rent, which does not exceed more than that we now pay, will yield him eight per cent. for the money he has invested. He says he can afford the house lower to me than to some others, for he is sure of being punctually paid; and sure you will not mutilate and deface, as most children do, shaving the doors with penknives, breaking windows, and destroying every way. So, you see, that virtue, and good habits, and manners (which are the les

ser virtues), are not only in the highest sense treasures, they are *money* to you. In the labouring class, property is a sign of good morals. In this country nobody sinks into deep poverty—*slumps through*, as your grandfather says, except by some vice, directly or indirectly. There are, perhaps, a few exceptions; I have known one, and but one. Come here, Ruth; is my sermon tiring you?"

"No, indeed, father, I always like your preaching; but I was thinking."

"Of what, Ruth?"

"That the scholars at our school don't know Mr. Beckwith; if they did, they would not call rich people so hateful."

"Children are excellent judges."

"But, father, their folks tell them."

"Observe for yourselves, my children, and don't trust to what others tell you. If you make good use of your bodily eyes, and the eyes of your mind, you will see that Providence has bound the rich and the poor by one chain. Their interests are the same; the prosperity of one is the prosperity of all. The fountains are with the rich, but they are no better than a stagnant pool till they flow in streams to the labouring people. The enterprise and success of the merchant give us employment and rich rewards for our labour. We are dependant on them, but they are quite as dependant on us. If there were none of these hateful rich people, Ruth, who, think you, would build hospitals, and provide asylums for orphans, and for the deaf and dumb, and the blind?"

"I never thought of that, father!"

“There are many older than you, my child, who come to wrong conclusions for want of thinking.”

“Now, Harry Aikin,” said Uncle Phil, who (as our readers may be) was getting tired and sleepy, “I don’t see the use of so much thinking ; thinking is dreadful puzzling work, I tell you ! The whole of it is, you must just do your duty *thoroughly*, and then you’ll be contented in this world, and happy in the next ; and poverty or riches won’t make a straw’s difference either way.”

“But ’tis a comfort, father,” said Susan, “to the poor, to *feel* that there is nothing low in poverty—to remember that the greatest, wisest, and best Being that ever appeared on earth had no part nor lot in the riches of this world ; and that, for our sakes, he became poor.”

“To be sure it is, Susy—to be sure it is.”

NOTE.

'THE writer of the preceding pages would not be supposed to want a due respect for the art of medicine ; that it sometimes cures and sometimes alleviates, there can be no doubt ; but, does not the patient often resort to it, and resort to it in vain, when, if he had studied and obeyed the laws of physiology, he would not have needed the aid it cannot give.

'The laws of Him who made us are perfect. "*It is a very different thing to comply blindly with the directions which come to us simply on the authority of a man like ourselves, and to comply intelligently with those which claim our obedience on the authority of the Creator.*"

The suggestions made in this volume, on the use of ablutions, ventilation, flannel, &c., for the preservation of health, are derived from the admirable and popular work of Andrew Combe on Physiology, and from an observation of the benefit derived from the actual application of his rules. We give a few brief extracts from his work, and wish that the whole, in a more popular form, were in every habitation in our land.

"Taking," says Mr. Combe, "even the lowest estimate of Lavoisier, we find the skin endowed

with the important charge of removing from the system about twenty ounces of waste matter every twenty-four hours."—"Insensible perspiration removes from the skin, without trouble and without consciousness, a large quantity of useless materials; and, at the same time, keeps the skin soft and moist, and thereby fits it for the performance of its functions as the organ of external sense."—"Where the perspiration is brought to the surface of the skin, and confined there, either by injudicious clothing, or by want of cleanliness, there is much reason to suppose that its residual parts are again absorbed, and act on the system as a poison of greater or less power, according to its quantity and degree of concentration, thereby producing fever, inflammation, and even death itself." Mr. Combe proceeds to adduce many facts to support the theory that diseases are taken in through the skin, and therefrom infers the necessity of guarding it. "Brocchi ascribes the immunity (from the effects of malaria) of the sheep and cattle which pasture night and day in the Campagna to the protection afforded them by their wool."—"Similar means have been found effectual in preserving the health of labourers digging and excavating drains and canals in marshy grounds, where, previous to the employment of these precautions, the mortality from fever was very considerable."

"The insensible perspiration being composed of a large quantity of water, which passes off in the form of vapour, and is not seen, and of various salts and animal matter, a portion of which remains adherent to the skin, *the removal of this residue by*

washing becomes an indispensable condition of health."

In youth and health, "cold bathing and lighter clothing may be resorted to with a rational prospect of advantage; but when, *from a weak constitution or unusual susceptibility, the skin is not endowed with sufficient vitality to originate the necessary reaction which alone renders these safe and proper—when they produce an abiding sense of chillness, however slight in degree—we may rest assured that mischief will inevitably follow at a greater or shorter distance of time.*"

"Many youths, particularly females, and those whose occupations are sedentary, pass days, weeks, and months without experiencing the pleasing glow and warmth of a healthy skin, and are habitually complaining of chillness on the surface, cold feet, and other symptoms of deficient cutaneous circulation. Their suffering, unfortunately, does not stop here; for the unequal distribution of the blood oppresses the internal organs; and too often, by insensible degrees, lays the foundation of tubercles in the lungs, and other maladies, which show themselves only when arrived at an incurable stage."—"All who value health, and have common sense and resolution, will take warning from signs like these, and never rest till the equilibrium be restored. For this purpose, *warm clothing, exercise in the open air, sponging with vinegar and water, regular friction with a flesh-brush or hair glove, and great cleanliness, are excellently adapted.*"

"The Creator has made exercise *essential* as a means of health; and, if we neglect this, and seek

it in clothing alone, it is at the risk, or rather certainty, of weakening the body, relaxing the surface," &c. &c.—“Many good constitutions are thus ruined, and many nervous and pulmonary complaints brought on to imbecile existence.”

“Flannel, from being a bad conductor of heat, prevents that of the animal economy from being quickly dissipated, and protects the body in a considerable degree from the influence of sudden external changes. From its presenting a rough and uneven, though a soft, surface to the skin, every movement of the body in labour or exercise gives, by the consequent friction, a gentle stimulus to the cutaneous vessels and nerves, which assists their action, and maintains their functions in health; and being, at the same time, of a loose and porous texture, flannel is capable of absorbing the cutaneous exhalations to a larger extent than any other material in common use.”

“It is during the sudden changes from heat to cold, so common in autumn, before the frame has got inured to the reduction of temperature, that protection is most wanted, and flannel is most useful.”

“The exhalation from the skin being so constant and extensive, its bad effects when confined suggest another rule of conduct, viz.—that of frequently changing and airing the clothes, so as to free them from every impurity. It is an excellent plan to wear two sets of flannels, each being worn and aired by turns, on alternate days.”—“A practice common in Italy merits universal adoption. Instead of beds being made up in the morning the moment they are vacated, and while still saturated

with the nocturnal exhalations which, before morning, became sensible, even to smell, in a bedroom, the bedclothes were thrown over the backs of chairs, the mattresses shaken up, and the windows thrown open for the greater part of the day, so as to secure a thorough and cleansing ventilation."

"The opposite practice, carried to extremes in the dwellings of the poor, where three or four beds are often huddled up, with all their impurities, in a small room, is a fruitful source of fever and bad health, even where ventilation during the day, and nourishment, are not deficient."

"In eastern and warm countries, where perspiration is very copious, ablution and bathing have assumed the importance of religious observances."

"The warm, tepid, cold, or shower bath, as a means of preserving health, ought to be in as common use as a change of apparel, for it is equally a measure of necessary cleanliness."—"Our continental neighbours consider the bath as a necessary of life."

We hope the following remarks, which Mr. Combe quotes from Stuart, the traveller, will be taken as a wholesome admonition, not as an unkind censure:—

"The practice of travellers washing at the doors, or in the porticoes or stoops, or at the wells of taverns and hotels, once a day, is most prejudicial to health; the ablution of the body, which ought never to be neglected, *at least twice a day* being inconsistent with it. I found it more difficult, in travelling in the United States, to procure a liberal supply of water, at all times of the day in my bedchamber, than any other necessary. A

supply for washing the hands and face once a day seems all that is thought requisite."

"For general use, the tepid, or warm bath, seems to me much more suitable than the cold bath, especially in winter, for those who are not robust and full of animal heat."—"For those not robust, daily sponging of the body with cold water and vinegar, or salt water, is the best substitute for the cold bath, and may be resorted to with safety, especially when care is taken to excite in the surface, by subsequent friction with the flesh-brush or hair glove, the healthy glow of reaction."—"A person in sound health may take a bath at any time, except immediately after meals."—"As a general rule, active exertion ought to be avoided for an hour or two after using the warm or tepid bath."—"If the bath cannot be had at all places, *soap and water may be obtained everywhere*, and leave no apology for neglecting the skin; or, if the constitution be delicate, water and vinegar, or water and salt. A rough and rather coarse towel is a very useful auxiliary. Few of those who have steadiness enough to keep up the action of the skin by the above means, and to avoid strong exciting causes, will ever suffer from colds, sore throats, or similar complaints."—"If one tenth of the persevering attention and labour bestowed to so much purpose in rubbing down and currying the skins of horses, were bestowed on the human race in keeping themselves in good condition, and a little attention were paid to diet and clothing, colds, nervous diseases, and stomach complaints would cease to form so large a catalogue in human miseries."

We wish we could enrich our little book with farther extracts, but we must conclude with again earnestly recommending Dr. Combe's work, "The Principles of Physiology, applied to the Preservation of Health," as one of the most important for the family library.

THE END.

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